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THE ITALIAN MASTERS

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Pollaiuolo] [*Poldi-Pezzoli, Milan*

Portrait of an Unknown Lady

THE ITALIAN MASTERS

A SURVEY AND GUIDE

By
HORACE SHIPP

WITH A CHART OF THE ITALIAN
ARTISTS OF THE RENAISSANCE BY
FLORA KENDRICK

With thirty-three plates in colour and half-tone and a chart showing the Italian Painters from the Thirteenth to the Sixteenth Centuries.

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To
CHRISTINE GREGORY

INTRODUCTION

ITALIAN ART is rightly regarded as part of the cultural heritage of the race. Vaguely we realise that during those three centuries, when the newly-found light of the old classic culture allied to fresh scientific discoveries dissipated the darkness of the Middle Ages, methods of thinking and of depicting came into being which hold good down to our own times. Vaguely we feel that the understanding and appreciation of the art of that time take our minds out into a new dimension wherein all art will be for ever significant for us. In that faith we pass the turnstile of one of the great galleries; in that faith we examine the first room, perhaps the second. "Madonna and Child" by . . . (the names have the confusing family likeness of any unfamiliar foreign tongue), "Madonna with Angels," "Virgin Enthroned": the titles are not very helpful, for all three Madonnas have been enthroned, all alike have been attended by angels or saints. Slowly æsthetic enthusiasm wears thin; and if it recovers again at the picture postcard stall near the exit, its recovery honestly looked at would reveal more affinity with a duty faithfully fulfilled than with rapture. We come out into the sunlight of Trafalgar Square, or the Rue de Rivoli, or the Piazza della Signoria with a sense of having missed something, even though we have a subconscious determination that pride forbids us to confess the fact.

The truth is that with painting, as with music, with literature, with all fine things, we need some chord in our own minds which will vibrate to a work of art itself. The created rightness of a fine picture will often be sufficient to establish this harmony, and the moments when that happens give us a tantalising understanding of the experiences all this art should be bringing if we ourselves were attuned to reception of it.

Alongside that instinctive rapture, however, we can establish an approach of interest founded first in knowledge—knowledge which will see this mass of art as a living, developing whole, which will be able to follow its lines of development, which will relate the pictures to breathing fellow creatures and to the happenings and thoughts of their own vivid, colourful times; which will, in fact, turn these pictures into communications from one man's mind to our own, distinguishable each from each by the characteristic thought and workmanship of their respective creators. With such basic knowledge shape emerges from chaos. Strangely, too, because the mind has freed itself from confusion, we find in this more comprehensible world many more moments of rapture: those moments when a picture seems suddenly to open a shutter into its own ideal world. In the galleries we establish familiar contacts; men and movements reveal themselves; some characteristic method of a master duly recognised recalls its use in another work. Art becomes no longer a dead thing outside ourselves, but a live interest; and that chord in our own minds resounds to the whole wonderful symphony of it.

Where, then, can we find these basic facts? Too often the books which set out to guide us only repeat or anticipate the confusion of the galleries. Written by

specialists, they know too much, state too much. My own experience when I was editing the publication of a series of critical-biographies of these masters taught me that in no one book could I find just the fundamental relevant facts—a little of the man, his date and place of work; from whom he derived as an artist; what fresh contribution he made to the whole movement of art; where I could look for his most important works; above all, what were the characteristic things about his pictures which would make them recognisably his, and thereby interesting. I found that only by diligent search, by piling my table with a score of books and articles upon each of these men, could I come by that kernel of useful knowledge. I grew to yearn for charts which would show me the relative position in place and period of these men at a glance. I wanted to know a little about the history of Italy, the movements of thought at the time—not a great deal, for I am neither historian nor theologian, politician nor scientist. But I did need to know just enough to enable me to approach the pictures as living expressions from once-living men.

At a time when London was promised the greatest Exhibition of Italian Masters which had ever been seen outside of Italy itself, this need of mine widened out to something approaching an imperative, for thousands who would attend that Exhibition could be helped by a single publication giving just those facts in an easily-come-by form. So, at a risk of confounding confusion, I added one more book. Its apologia is not that it adds fresh knowledge, nor propounds fresh theories, but that it presents essential knowledge in a manner easily grasped and simple of reference.

I have purposely chosen some of my illustrations from the permanent collections at English Galleries,

believing that it will help the student to be able easily to consult the original pictures and yet have reproductions at hand for reference.

Thus, to the traveller and sightseer who would get the best from the great galleries, to the casual lover of art, to the teacher and student who want a book on their desk wherein the relevant fact can be readily ascertained, even to the art specialist for whom

> "The way is all so very plain
> That he may lose the way,"

I offer this book, claiming neither erudition nor new revelation, but brevity and clarity, as my justification.

Italy—Hampstead
1929

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THE PRONUNCIATION OF ITALIAN PROPER NAMES

Since the issue of the first edition of *Italian Masters* it has been suggested to me that English readers who are not familiar with Italian would be helped by a verification of the generally accepted pronunciation of the names of the artists. This list will, we hope, not only indicate the pronunciation of the most noteworthy, but will give the key to the whole subject.

Angelico . .	än-gel′ē-ko
Albertinelli .	äl-bär-ti-nel′lē
Bartolommeo .	bär-tō-lom-mā′ō
Baldovinetti .	bäl-dō-vē-net′tē
Bellini, Jacopo .	bel-lē′nē, yä-cō-pō
Gentile .	jen-te′lā
Giovanni	jō-van′nē
Benozzo Gozzoli	ben-ōt′sō got′sō-lē
Botticelli . .	bot-tē-chel′lē
Carracci . .	kär-rä′chē
Caravaggio . .	kä-rä-väd′jō
Carpaccio . .	kär-pä′chō
Cimabue . .	chē-mä-bō′ā
Correggio . .	kor-red′jō
Credi . . .	krā′dē
Domenichino .	dō-men-ē-kē′nō
Duccio	dō′chō
di Buoninsegna	dē bwōn-ēn-sen′yä
Melozzo da Forli	mel-ōt′sō dä for-lē′
Francia . . .	frän′chä
Francesca,	frän-ches′kä
Piero della	
Ghirlandajo .	gēr-län-dä′yō
Giorgione . .	jor-jō′ne
Giotto . . .	jot′tō
Leonardo da	lē-ō-nä′dō dä
Vinci	vin′chē
Lorenzo Monaco	lō-ren′zō mon′ä-kō
Luini . . .	lö-ē′nē
Mantegna . .	män-tān′yä
Masaccio . .	mä-sät′chō
Medici . . .	med′ē-chē, or
	mā′dē-chē
Michel Angelo .	mē-kel-än′je-lō
Perugino . .	pā-rö-jē′nō
Pinturicchio .	pēn-tö-rēk′ke-ō
Pollaiuolo . .	pol-lä-yö-ō′lō
Raphael. . .	rā′fā-el, or raf′ā-el
Guido Reni .	gooe′dō rā′nē
Sarto, Andrea del	sär′tō
Sforza . . .	sfort′sä
Signorelli . .	sēn-yō-rel′lē
Titian . . .	tish′an
Uffizi . . .	öf-fēt′sē
Verrocchio . .	vā-rok′kē-ō
Veronese . .	vā-rō-nā′ze

THE ITALIAN MASTERS

PROLOGUE IN BYZANTIUM

In history all beginnings are arbitrary. An outstanding date, an outstanding event may serve; but in the dim past beyond it the shadowy lines stretch out through what seems an infinity of other events, each alike cause and effect. In the study of Italian Art we make that arbitrary beginning with the coming of Duccio at Siena, Cimabue and Giotto at Florence, and Cavallini at Rome; or perhaps with the forgathering of these artists at the basilica of S. Francis at Assisi. But behind them, through the centuries, stretch the forms of art which they were partly to supplant with their new humanistic conceptions, partly to perfect; and both the revolt and the tradition must be noticed if we are to understand the significance of their work and of the period of art whereof it proved the dawn.

Seen from one aspect that pre-Renaissance art derives from the symbolistic Christian paintings of the catacombs, which took the traditional ornamentation of Imperial Roman decoration and the naturalistic methods such as we see in Pompeian wall pictures, and from them perfected an art which, beneath a surface decoration, had its profound significance to the initiate. Seen from another it belongs to the illuminated manuscripts

which served the proselytism and worship of the Church through all the centuries, and took on a new lease of life when the monastery system developed in the 9th century. These and other threads of the art expression of the Middle Ages were gathered together, brought to a great purpose, and radiated anew when Constantine, the first Christian Emperor of Rome, decided to strengthen the strategic position of the diffuse and failing Empire by establishing his court at Byzantium; and it is to the great new city on the Bosphorus we must look for the significant preliminaries of Italian Art.

It was in the 4th century that the move was made creating the Eastern and Western Empires. It was in A.D. 388 that Theodosius adopted Christianity as the state religion of Rome: the triumphant recognition of the power of the Church which had grown as Rome decayed. In the troubled years which followed, Italy itself was overrun again and again: by Visigoths and Huns, by Vandals and Ostrogoths; and although the Eastern Empire had its own great difficulties, life there was not so disturbed, and the Eastern Empire flourished. The growth of Constantinople was the outward sign of that rise to power and comparative security. It was planned from the beginning as a great and impressive city; this as a definite part of the policy of impressing the people. In that expression the might of the Empire and the might of the Christian Church were to go hand in hand, and artists were deliberately called to the city for that purpose. Many of them had already fled there from the constant invasions to which a weakened Italy was subject.

Thus was founded a definitely Christian art calculated to impress; and for more than seven hundred years it throve lustily. It was, as we might expect, largely

expressed in buildings, but it concerns us chiefly as the decoration of those hundreds of churches. It tended towards mosaic as its medium, because mosaic meant a rich encrustation of gold, which was in itself impressive, and because it told out well either out-of-doors in sunshine or in the darkened interiors. Mosaic in itself as a technique did not encourage the portrayal of movement, but this would not have been sufficient to create a static art had there not been the deliberate icon policy to support it. The catacomb paintings had taught artists symbolic exaggeration: the large eyes which betokened spirituality, the large hands of prayer, and many other known signs. Church and State recruited this impressive language into their propaganda; and the icon arrangement of scale, symbolic gesture, static frontal pose, and dependence upon definitely non-naturalistic conventions, became the basis of this art. Its business was to impress the people, to stand remote from them, proclaiming wealth, splendour, and superhuman qualities for their worship and respect.

That art re-entered Italy largely through the legation of the Eastern Empire at Ravenna, and it was so obviously successful that it came as a conquering force wherever the growing power of the Church needed witness. The paradox of the "Wars of the images," which raged through the 8th century, was that it was the Byzantine Emperor who decreed pictures and images idolatrous, and the Popes at Rome who defended them. Leo, the Iconoclast, forebade; Popes Gregory II. and III. fought and at last won, so that they were able to threaten with excommunication any who destroyed further the precious and holy images. Enormous numbers had been destroyed in the conflict, but its triumphant conclusion was an immense encouragement to art; and

during the years of conflict any artists who could, would have returned from Byzantium and the East to Italy.

So this icon art established itself firmly throughout the Peninsula. It had gathered an immobile formalism. It had Greek elements of line and Eastern ones of ornamentation; it had the elements of symbolistic caricature which came from the early Christian catacomb art derived from Roman secular work; it had decorative adjuncts from these same sources; and richness of material to underline its importance; and it had no naturalism nor humanity since these very qualities would have defeated its purpose.

The art of the manuscripts—which had for its original purpose chiefly illustration and, therefore, narrative—might have acted as a counter tendency; but on the whole the main stream was too strong, and dragged all Christian art in its current. Nevertheless, we must look to the manuscripts for one strong influence which the growth of humanism released to function: this narrative vein which the Church books served to keep alive. The scholars and scribes of Alexandria, the great book centre of the mediæval world, spread hundreds of thousands of these miniature pictures throughout Christendom; and even at Constantinople itself the art of the manuscript decorators escaped entire submersion beneath iconography. When, in the 8th and 9th centuries, Charlemagne did so much for the encouragement of the monastic system, the stream of this narrative illuminating art broadened; and although the famous abbot, Desiderius, for his great 11th century monastic book factory at Monte Cassino, brought his artists from the Byzantine countries, the main tendency of the manuscripts of the Middle Ages was this narrative one. When the humanistic religion of S. Francis and

the new teaching order of S. Dominic needed the services of art, therefore, it was this tradition to which their artists turned.

Here, then, in opposition and in assistance, were the forces which operated at the end of the 13th century. The tradition stood firmly fixed in the golden icon art of Byzantium, an art which knew now no gleam of humanity, and faltered and failed when men's minds turned to the new thought of the Renaissance.

THE MEANING OF THE RENAISSANCE

To regard Italian Art merely as art is to miss much of its significance. Studying these pictures as so many achievements in painting we are in danger of not seeing the wood for the trees, for any art must owe a large part of its claim to its power of reflecting the life and thought of its time. That life and thought become inevitably crystallised in the literature, the painting and sculpture, even the architecture of any period. Art, indeed, is the articulation of mankind conscious of itself and of the world around; and by consequence these fine or applied arts are indebted for much of their importance to the mental or spiritual fecundity or sterility of the epoch which they at once reflect and create.

Next to the golden age of Pericles in Greece, the period from the 13th to the 16th century in Europe is the most important in the history of human thought. It was in part a re-birth—a renaissance—of that great classic age, but to treat it only thus is to be tripped into error by the metaphor. Nor must we think of it as a recovery from a period vaguely called " the Dark Ages," with the implication of universal barbarism following the break-up of the Roman Empire. The " Dark Ages " (especially in Italy, where the Church even at its feeblest remained a power) had their own particular light, and we must remember that for those who lived by that light the Renaissance was an encroaching darkness. Thus it is not to be regarded in the simple terms of the

revival of classical learning in a world of ignorance: that was but one of the elements. The development of nationalities, geographical discoveries and maritime adventurings, the beginning of science, S. Francis preaching a gospel of loving-kindness and S. Dominic preaching one of intelligence, the decay of the omnipotence of the Church: these things, as much as the passion for old manuscripts, the revival of the study of Greek and the search for antique marbles, were among the elements. The invention of printing and the consequent European use of the earlier Chinese invention of paper enormously widened the range of receptivity. All this led in one direction—the restoration of man's self-esteem, his belief in himself as body and mind in a world fitted to their functioning. This, broadly, is what we imply by humanism; it was the great effect of which all else was cause.

The result was to remove the vortex of man's being from the future life to this. The Christianity of the Middle Ages, emphasising the mystical elements in Christ's teaching, had preached salvation by the suppression of the natural man, subjugation of the body, and the acceptance of this world as a vale of tears through which the faithful might reach heaven. The uncertainty and misery of a society continually harassed by war, plague, and other disasters lent colour to the view. The first condition necessary for a changed viewpoint was some sort of social security wherein life could burgeon. Such security came slowly enough, but the change of thought also was a slow growth, already well on the way in the 13th century when Abelard promulgated his new doctrine of reason as a necessary preliminary to faith, or Petrarch established his method of scholarship which turned men's eyes to the Greek

writings, yet not really blossoming until the 15th century in Italy. Then Cyriac of Ancona could cry histrionically: "I go to awake the dead"; then the passion for collecting old manuscripts, for excavating ancient marbles and buildings, was at its height; and all the aids of exploration, travel, intercourse between peoples, printing, scientific discovery, and luxury in living fulfilled this tendency towards human self-esteem.

In vain did a Savonarola urge a return to the mediæval viewpoint. He was a strong man, and his passionate advocacy rallied all the wavering forces of the Middle Ages. For a moment, as his band of children passed through Florence collecting all that stood outside the spiritual pale for that "burning of vanities," the Renaissance halted. Or was it that the people, with subconscious subtlety, indulged in another sensation? Anyway, the *revanche* of the outraged time-spirit was swift and sure; and with the martyrdom of the zealot—himself, by strange paradox, a typical child of that age against which he preached—the last barrier was down.

The art of Italy, from the mediævalism of Cimabue and Duccio to the sensuous worldliness of the Venetians, the scientific humanism of the later Florentines, the sublimation of the mind in Leonardo and of the body in Michel Angelo, is the reflection of that movement. Duccio and Cimabue, Giotto and Cavallini begin it when first they cease to create only altar-images for worship, and commence to record the happenings of life. Siena, of all schools, stood out against it, but it drags her relentlessly forward, and eventually kills her art because she cannot keep pace. The Umbrians, because of their provincialism, come near to uniting the conflicting elements in their painting, as S. Francis, their most noteworthy son, did in religion; but again

the *Zeitgeist* triumphs, and even their spirituality becomes an attribute of all-functioning humanity. The Florentines, at the centre of the culture of these centuries, show, step by step, the growth of this culture: their art moves in orderly sequence from Byzantine iconography through every stage of humanism to its climax in the grand style, which shows the human body in sublime action. They not only brought art from heaven to earth, but scaled heaven anew in the apotheosis of man. The Northern painters and the Venetians, entering late, had the Renaissance as their birthright: their art commences with the assumption of mankind in triumphant possession of his world.

We watch this progress expressing itself in every way: in the change from remote Asian icon-madonnas to beautiful women; in the evolution from mystical Biblical narratives to incidents from contemporary life; in the invasion of pagan mythological ideas; in the growing appreciation of the beauty of this world, and of the marvellous mechanism and beauty of the human body. This as to matter; and as to manner, in the scientific understanding of perspective, anatomy, chiaroscuro and the actual manipulation of various methods of colour.

Thus the study of that fertile three hundred years of Italian painting takes on a significance much wider than its æsthetic one. The change of thought has held good right down to our own time, which is indeed a continuance of this same movement. To understand the significance of this art is to understand the dawning of the philosophy of values which, roughly speaking, dominate the modern world; and we may rightly turn to these Italian masters who stand at the opening of our era to initiate us into its prevailing *credo*.

SIENA OF THE TRADITIONS

Once, Ghiberti tells us in his commentaries, the Sienese dug up a lovely nude Venus, so exquisite that "all versed and instructed in the art of sculpture, and all goldsmiths and painters ran to see this so marvellous statue." They set it up on the fountain in the great square with such jubilation as Siena could always give. But the triumph of Venus was transient. Things went badly in the wars with their traditional enemies, the Florentines, and in solemn council the Sienese decided to smash this dangerous, newly-found loveliness, and to bury the pieces in Florentine soil. Which indeed they did; and whatever the results in the fortunes of war, we may be sure that the city turned back to her single-hearted worship of the Virgin, that great *Virgin in Majesty* of Duccio's which glowed over her cathedral altar.

The story might stand as a symbol of Siena and her art. She was ever the Virgin's city, since her consecration in 1259, when faith had turned the Florentine Guelphs back from her very gates. She could have little dealing with this pagan humanism of the Renaissance. Let Florence run after her strange images, draw inspiration from the old paganism and the new realism; Siena remains almost Byzantine, with an art of symbolism, mysticism and idealism.

So whilst Florence touched the whole gamut of the Renaissance from 1250 to the 16th century, whilst Umbria climbed to Raphael, and Venice to Titian, Siena remained

conservative; and the art of Sassetta at the end of her day shows only a slight variant on that combined style of Byzantine decoration and crowded narrative which Duccio had practised two hundred years before.

As the Virgin's city her artists were painting the Assumption a hundred years before it was accepted elsewhere. That was her advance: into a deeper mysticism. As a mystic city the gold skies of Byzantium glowed from her pictures long after the other schools had seen them blue and made them thus; the Asian-eyed madonnas sat enthroned in their unreal worlds a century after Florentine Filippo Lippi had found his models in the streets. Siena had no quarrel with the Byzantine style; her art was of the ideal and had little need for realism. The growth of knowledge, which even her conservatism could not avoid, gave more individuality to the figures, loosened the lines of the draperies, corrected the perspective of the architecture; but her mind for dreamy legend remained unmoved.

Thus it was that throughout Sienese art two lines were faithfully pursued: one was narrative, the telling of the story with all the recognisable details of tradition; the other was decoration, the filling of the picture space after the crowded Byzantine mediæval manner. *Guido of Siena*, whose Virgin in the Palazzo Pubblico is dated as early as 1221, or that unknown artist who painted the Altar-piece of S. Peter which we see in the Academy (with the torturers of the saint slashed by the knives of the pious Sienese), these are links with the older art. They carry us forward to *Duccio*, the father of the school, finer and more sensitive than his Florentine contemporary, Cimabue. His great Altar-piece with its decorated front and its narrative panels at the back contained the whole potentiality of Sienese art. After him *Simone*

Martini could carry the decoration to its highest degree of æsthetic refinement, the *Lorenzetti* could pursue the narrative style, crowding their frescoes with piled architecture and tiny figures; in later artists the two styles could intermingle or stand apart; could even attempt revolt, as when *Barna* tried to clear away the mass of accessories, or when *Matteo di Giovanni* came from Umbria with the learning of Piero della Francesca; but Sienese art and the spirit of place were too strong, and when *Nerocchio di Landi*, the last true Sienese painter, died in 1500, the art which died with him was recognisably that of Duccio and Simone Martini. After that *Sodoma* came from Piedmont, and worked on until the middle of the century with a robust materialism which turned the legends to sentimentalities. He has no spiritual place in this art of the dreaming city of the Virgin, and we gladly turn our thoughts back again to the golden beginnings of that story, or at least to that arbitrary beginning when the Virgin of Duccio was carried in triumph through the streets of Siena.

DUCCIO 1260–*c.*1320

Duccio di Buoninsegna stands at the beginning of Italian painting alongside Giotto, his great Florentine contemporary. Much of what we know of him suggests someone possessed in marked degree with what we may call the "artistic temperament." There are records of fines imposed and of debts unpaid; there is his cavalier contract for the Madonna in S. Maria Novella in Florence, which gave the patrons the right to reject it if they did not like the finished work. Duccio made that contract in 1285, when he was twenty-five years old. It looks as though he was already sure of his powers, as well he might be, for he produced a work of lovely transition

between Byzantine stateliness and Renaissance grace, so that for centuries the *Rucellai Madonna* was ascribed to Cimabue, but recent research has given it back to Duccio of Siena. With that picture we may say that the new painting had begun: the folds of the robes, the drawing of the feet and hands, and the curves of the contours: these were new things in art.

In 1309 he contracted to produce his altar painting for the cathedral at Siena. It proved his masterpiece. The front, with its crowded host of angels, apostles and saints around the Virgin, was an advance upon any work then known to the world, but when the Sienese added to their original commission one for a series of panels at the back, showing the lives of Christ and the Virgin, Duccio had his chance. We can study three of these panels, including the finely austere *Transfiguration* in the National Gallery. They established the type of Sienese narrative art. They almost begin landscape painting, for in the *Gethsemane* we have a real garden, and in the *Entry to Jerusalem* he has trees touched with light at the edges of the leaves. His architecture was far from sound as to its perspective, but its decorative line breaking up the picture space gave Duccio what he wanted. This masterly altar-piece deserved its early fame, and we join in spirit in that procession which carried it in triumph from the artist's bottega to the cathedral. After 1318 we hear no more of the artist, but the Renaissance in painting had been established in his hands.

The characteristics of Duccio's art we find in these panels. His work, as we know it, is in tempera on wood. His basis is Byzantine, with its gold skies, its long-eyed women, its aureoled angels and saints; but he adds to this a new grace and elegance. We get it from his

swinging contour lines, his lightly folded draperies (note particularly the flowing grace of the edges of that drapery, the free line in place of the old stiff folds); we get it from his beautifully drawn hands and feet. His art became a kind of feminine Byzantinism in its sensitiveness. In his narrative work he has a sense of the dramatic, picking out the climax of the story and conveying it with gestures observed from life. He crowds his picture in the Byzantine fear of empty spaces, but he succeeds in having a real understanding of orderliness and dramatic focus, attained usually by the concentrated attention of the characters in his picture. His nature forms are drawn in careful outline. Difficulties made him simplify, but we feel him trying to put down the thing as he sees it. In figures and in landscape he endeavoured to depict, within the compass of his Byzantine training, a world based on nature.

His greatest works are those we have mentioned. Age has made him a rare master, but the remains of the *Madonna in Majesty* altar-piece in the cathedral museum at Siena and its separate panels in the National Gallery and elsewhere, his *Rucellai Madonna* at Florence, and an occasional panel, tell us enough of his power to establish his claim alongside that of Cimabue as the pioneer of Italian Art.

Of Duccio's pupils and disciples three at least became great masters in this golden dawn of Sienese art: Simone Martini established even more certainly than Duccio himself the decorative Gothic character of that art, and the brothers Lorenzetti worked its narrative vein. Two other lesser men, both early pupils of Duccio, must be glanced at in passing: one is Segna da Buonaventura, the other Ugolino.

SEGNA goes no further than his master in daring, hesitating to free himself from the iconography of earlier art, yet, in his Madonnas, following Duccio's innovations by giving the Child some little natural action rather than the symbolistic and mystical acts of Byzantine art. A *Crucifixion* in the National Gallery is typical of hundreds made by artists of this period and school: the cross is shaped to allow for figures of saints at the ends of the arms, the halo is patterned and built out in relief above the figure; the whole work is for decoration and worship.

In the works of UGOLINO we are singularly rich, and he shows himself remarkably able to explore the narrative style which Duccio commenced. We can observe in such panels as the *Betrayal* (National Gallery) how he has given every person a definite character. In his day he had a great reputation, and as we look at these little pictures we can understand the preference. Today we accord that preference to another of Duccio's disciples, perhaps the most magnificent painter of the Sienese school.

SIMONE MARTINI (1283–1344) The story of Martini's life is the story of his art. Vasari, pro-Florentine that he was, does not tell us much of the artists of Siena, and does not deign even to record or invent legends of them. We know of Simone the facts of his paintings and many of the dates, so that we are able to follow him in the journeys which took him at last to work at Avignon, at the Papal court which had been established there. In 1315 he painted the fine *Madonna in Majesty* which we find in the Palazzo Pubblico at Siena, with Mary enthroned under her canopy like a queen of the courts of

love with her attendants proffering flowers. It is distinctive of his style: highly decorative, aristocratic, intellectualised. Two years later he is at Naples working at the *S. Louis* paintings in S. Lorenzo. Here one finds still the trace of earlier art in the different scale of the central figure and that of the attendants, and only in the predella paintings is this icon style sacrificed for naturalistic story-telling—a procedure which we remark in many instances with this art of the transition. From Naples, Simone went to work at Pisa and at Orvieto; then, in 1325, he was called to the centre of artistic Italy at that time: the church of S. Francis at Assisi. His *decorations for the chapel of S. Martin* are among the most interesting in the church. They reveal the artist as being intensely interested in the life of his time. S. Martin was a 4th century saint, but Simone, depicting his life, shows us much of the costume, the architecture, the accessories of his own 14th in these frescoes. In 1328 Sienese patriotism (which always ran as a strong current alongside her mediæval mysticism) gave him an opportunity for a definitely secular picture in a commission for a fresco of the *Condottiere Guidoriccio riding out from the Sienese Camp*. It is important as one of the earliest secular chronicle pictures and as one of the first landscapes. The Gothic draperies of the horse, the rich costume of the General, the battlemented towns on their hills, all must have delighted Martini, whose spiritual home was with the troubadours.

His next work is the masterpiece by which he is best known: the glorious Gothic altar-piece of the *Annunciation* in the Uffizi. In some ways it is a step back towards Duccio; but its conscious æstheticism, the lovely motive line of the shrinking Madonna caught up by the kneeling angel and reiterated in the golden lily, these things make

Simone Martini's picture one of the great works of the world. It is the highest expression of the flat decorative treatment which he affected.

In 1339 he was called to Avignon by the Pope, there to become the friend of Petrarch and the portraitist of Laura. In 1309 Pope Clement V., who had been a French cardinal, persuaded, not without reason, that Rome was unsafe, had moved the Papal court to Avignon, and for nearly seventy years the Popes lived there, building the great fortress-palace, and making Provence the centre of the religious as it was already the centre of the cultural world. It was to this Provençal court that Martini went, and doubtless its learned intercourse pleased him well. Unfortunately we have very little of the work he executed there. His frescoes have been destroyed, some panels of a narrative from an altar-piece are distributed between the Louvre, Berlin and Liverpool. They are, however, not in his happiest vein, and it is better to think of the artist, who died at Avignon in 1344, as the decorator of the S. Martin Chapel, the fresco painter of Siena itself, or the creator of the altar-piece in the Uffizi.

Lippo Memmi, Martini's assistant and brother-in-law, need not detain us. He is credited with work on the Annunciation altar painting, he repeats up at S. Gimignano his master's *Majesty*, and he probably worked with him at Assisi, where we find in the church of S. Clare a portrait of that saint by Memmi.

Simone Martini shared his glories in Siena with the brothers Lorenzetti, whom Ghiberti, writing two hundred years later, preferred to him. Certainly in the originality of their minds and methods they carried art forward, and profoundly influenced subsequent Sienese painters by their methods of narrative.

PIETRO LORENZETTO
(–1348)

AMBROGIO LORENZETTO
(1265–1348)

We know little of the early careers of the brothers. Even the dates of their births are obscure, though one authority gives that of Ambrogio as 1265. Their father was himself a painter, although we cannot with certainty place any of his work; but the brothers, pupils of Duccio, became important men, were given great commissions, and left us a number of fine works. Of the powers of Ambrogio, at least, one has only to look at those fragments of a fresco in the National Gallery, the *Four Heads of Nuns*, or the *Two Saints*, to realise his exquisite quality. It is at Siena, however, that we meet him most significantly; and at Assisi, where the brothers were called to help decorate the lower church. There they would have been in touch with Giotto, who greatly influenced Pietro, and, to a lesser extent, Ambrogio. Their work at Assisi has both the virtue and defect which we notice in all their achievement; on the one hand it succeeds in telling a story with a liveliness of incident, a differentiation of character, a humanity worthy of Giotto himself; on the other it tries to tell too much, and, failing to select, confuses the issue. Thus in the fresco, the *Last Supper*, we have not only the setting in a complicated Gothic chamber recessed behind the picture plane, but a side scene of a kitchen where scullions wash dishes, and cats eat the leavings. The *Entry into Jerusalem*, the *Way to Calvary* are equally circumstantial in their details; the eye loses itself among the piled architecture and crowded figures. Again Pietro, in his *Crucifixion*, spoils his effect by crowding his sky with tiny angels. This abundance of detail, complexity of acces-

sories, lack of rest space, was probably a legacy from the Byzantine art from which these Sienese painters derived, and throughout the whole history of their art it remained a characteristic.

We meet it in a fresh form in the *Good Government* fresco which Ambrogio was commissioned to execute for the Sala de Pace of the Palazzo Pubblico at Siena. This *Allegory of Good Government*, painted between 1337 and 1339, for all its fine intention and excellent individual figures and parts, is not well-managed as a synthesis. Better than this is the companion picture, the *Results of Good Government*. It was a happy and gracious idea of the artist to go to the window and paint an idealised version of what he saw from it. It was an unconscious revolution in art, for it gives us an authentic town landscape drawn directly from nature, as well as a record of contemporary manners, costume and customs, with its representation of dancing maidens, playing children, merchants, monks, knightly cavalcades, and all the other details of a prosperous city going about its business. Its secular spirit is rather that of the North, of such an artist as Pol de Limbourg, who, a hundred years later, was to do the Hours of Chantilly; and we may well rejoice that Siena's civic pride so early brought this fine work into existence. In this instance, perhaps because he had nature for a model, the crowded effect is avoided, and one can easily take in the detail; but neither of Ambrogio nor his brother can this usually be said. Look, for example, at Pietro's *Hermits of the Thebaid*, in the Uffizi: the wide landscape makes one want to say, "Well tried, sir!" but the monotonous detail of every phase of hermit life spoils our pleasure in the picture. Pietro is, indeed, never such a good painter as his brother, being much more antiquated in feeling. We

need only to compare their Madonnas: Pietro can with difficulty emancipate himself from Byzantine traits—the central figure larger in scale, the symbolistic attitudes, and the rest—but Ambrogio is noteworthy for the introduction of a human relationship between the Mother and Child. In an altar-piece in the Academy at Siena he makes the Virgin press her cheek against that of the Child; in one at Arezzo she holds Him away to gaze rapturously. Ambrogio's Virgins are never icon figures in juxtaposition with equally iconographic babe-adult Christs giving Papal blessings or otherwise evidencing divinity, but are human mothers caressing real babies. That in itself was a revolution in artistic thought.

So far as we know, both brothers died in that disastrous plague which swept Italy in 1348. Siena suffered terribly. The plans for the enlargement of her cathedral, then being built, were abandoned, and the original scheme completed. Her population was appallingly reduced, and in that debacle her two painter sons were lost. But their best works remain with her, in the Academy, in the Palazzo, in S. Francesco. We should also see what they did at Assisi; and to Pietro we cannot do full justice if we miss his earnest *Hermits* at Florence. Yet when all is seen many of us will like Ambrogio's *Heads of Nuns* and the *Saints* in the National Gallery best.

After this brilliant opening Sienese art loses its impetus. For two hundred years, while Florence advances from Giotto to Michel Angelo, Siena beautifully repeats the dreamy, golden decorations of Martini, or pursues the narrative which he and the Lorenzetti had created. Most of the painters use both styles as the need is for altar-pieces or narrative panels. The works of separate masters are so true to type that names and

centuries are almost submerged, and Sienese art becomes the only definition.

Barna of Siena (1340–1381) and Bartolo di Fredi (1330–1410), both of whom we meet in the Collegiate Church of S. Gimignano, deserve attention. Barna is a more stark painter than most Sienese; he got rid of the local accumulation of architecture and accessories, and painted the bare dramatic facts of the subject. Vasari tells us that he died as the result of a fall from his scaffolding in 1381; and, if we judge by the rare panels we possess, Sienese art lost a corrective and the world a master in that early death. Bartolo usually reproduces faithfully the complicated architecture and space arrangements of the Lorenzetti, but in one fascinating picture in the Academy at Siena we have an early processional picture, an *Adoration of the Magi*, with the cavalcade winding over the hills as it does in Gozzoli's masterpiece many decades later. Indeed, this Bartolo seems to have been an inventor of popular themes, for we find first in his pictures the idea of the Coronation of the Virgin, with attendant angels playing instruments; and he paints a Nativity of the Virgin earlier, so far as one can trace, than any other artist.

TADDEO DI BARTOLO (1362–1422)

Bartolo's chief pupil, with whom Sienese art carries into the 15th century, was Taddeo di Bartolo. He suffers from the immobility of the tradition, for his drawing is just that one degree nearer naturalism which spoils its naïveté. His colour, too, with predominant red-browns, and that undertint of green for the flesh which all these Sienese artists use, is not pleasing. Nevertheless, he was a big influence in his day, and the Umbrian painters were destined to turn

to him for inspiration. There are some interesting works by him in the picture gallery at Perugia, but we find him at his best in his native Siena. The *Death of the Virgin*, in the Palazzo Pubblico, is a most interesting work, with its background of gold sky against which the towers and roofs are outlined. The artistic anachronism might typify his art.

The direct line of Sienese painting descended through Bartolo's pupil, DOMENICO DI BARTOLO, whose work—notably the frescoes at the Scala Hospital at Siena—shows Florentine influence in its naturalism. But Siena, through these centuries, seems always to have turned back to her spiritual sources in Simone Martini and the Lorenzetti when her conservatism was thus threatened, and in her next really important painter, Sassetta, she achieved one of those typical reforms from a painter who at once frankly derives from the older masters and adds daring elements of his own.

SASSETTA (1392–1450) Stefano di Giovanni, as his name was, first wins our regard by a charming *Birth of the Virgin* at Asciano depicted in true Sienese style; but he reaches the height of his individuality in the altar-piece he executed for the Franciscan church at Bolgo San Sepolcro. Its panels are scattered, but nothing could be more delightful than the one now at Chantilly in France showing the *Marriage of S. Francis with Poverty*. Its line is exquisitely clear: a single group of figures contrasted against strangely cubist fields and silhouetted distant mountains, with the story element continued in the sky where the three maidens, Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, return to heaven. The free but very conscious pattern of the work is a refreshing note. It is the pure æstheticism of

Martini expressing itself in a later age. We meet it again in the *Temptation of S. Anthony* which is at New Haven, Conn., and wherein a rounded horizon of trees and flying birds emphasises this characteristic. In the National Gallery we have a study of *Heads of Angels* by Sassetta, beautifully drawn and with the tender feeling for line and colour of Lorenzetti's *Nuns*.

The respective conservative and experimental sides of Sassetta's genius find themselves reflected in the work of his two pupils, Sano di Pietro and Giovanni di Paolo.

SANO DI PIETRO (1406–1481) painted innumerable works of the heavily gilded altar-piece variety. His reputation in Siena was akin to that of Fra Angelico, his Florentine contemporary, and his pictures have Angelico's ecstatic joy. His obituary notice asserts that Sano was "a famous painter, and a man wholly dedicated to God"; and before his Gothic anconas—those structural paintings divided into many panels which are so typically Sienese—we believe the description. The lavish gold, the gay, bright colours, the miniature effects, the drawing brought up to the picture plane, the hint still of Byzantium in the almond-eyed Madonnas—all these characteristics we meet invariably in Sano's work. It is difficult to realise that Botticelli, Signorelli, Lippi, and even Leonardo were working at the same date.

GIOVANNI DI PAOLO (1403–1482) represents the progressive side of Sassetta's tutorage. That rectangular, draughts-board arrangement which Sassetta used in the S. Francis altar Giovanni borrows boldly for his *S. John Baptist* panels(now at Chicago) and what an amazing sense of

distance he achieves with them. Truly a revolution for the Sienese. But it was nothing compared to the innovations his *Flight into Egypt* introduces. We find the picture in the Siena Academy. On the picture plane, as we have met them since the days of Giotto, the main characters pass processionally. Amazingly behind them, however, we have a whole peopled landscape: men working in the fields, ploughing, walking the road; huts, houses, trees, hills and meadows. Nor is this all. Giovanni dared to make his sky blue instead of gold, he dared to put the sun into the corner of it, he gave the trees and houses carefully observed shadows, and he gilded the sunward side of the hills where the light would fall. So to this experimental and observant Giovanni, or even earlier to Gentile da Fabriano who painted the same Flight into Egypt subject with a similar effect in 1423, must be given the credit which Ruskin gave to Claude that he first "set the sun in the heavens"; anyway this picture at Siena is a landmark in the progress of painting.

MATTEO DI GIOVANNI (1430–1495) was the most important Sienese painter of the second part of the 15th century. He was not a native of Siena, but came there from his native Borgo San Sepolcro, and being an eclectic in art matters he adopted wholeheartedly the typical Sienese note. At Borgo we believe he had studied under Piero della Francesca, but evidently the spirit of place was too strong for him at Siena. The *Assumption of the Virgin*—favourite subject in the Virgin's city—was his happiest theme. We have a fine picture of it by him in the National Gallery, noteworthy for its charming landscape despite the golden Sienese sky. The figure of the Virgin is back in the non-human Byzantine tradition:

different in scale, symbolistic in pose, looking straight out of the picture. The colour of predominant blues and whites against the gold is charming. There also is a finely modelled *S. Sebastian* which in its sculpturesque strength reveals Piero's influence. Matteo was one of the designers of the cathedral pavement in Siena. He died in 1495. Sienese art, still almost unmoved from its beginnings, entered into the 16th century, which saw it decline, whilst in Florence, in Milan, in Umbria, and even in belated Venice, the golden age of Italian painting was at the full.

The other painters of the 14th century are minor men, unless we make exception of Francesco di Giorgio.

Sassetta's pupil, BENVENUTO (1436–1518) paints the *Assumption* in much the same mood as we have seen Matteo do it, as witness the version now in the Metropolitan Museum at New York. His *Madonna of the White Rose* in the National Gallery is still an icon picture. GIROLAMO, his son, who lived on until 1524, continued the manner, but Renaissance influences are making themselves felt with him. NEROCCIO DI LANDI (1447–1500) shows these influences by his delicacy and the modelling of his figures, but he is really the last of the true Sienese. The man with whom he worked in partnership until 1475 led the invading thought of other schools into Siena; and the art perished, able neither to adopt nor withstand the alien tendencies.

FRANCESCO DI GIORGIO (1439–1502) was painter, sculptor, architect and engineer. He was thus a typical figure of the wider Renaissance, ready to go wherever big work was offering, competing for the cathedral façade at Florence,

working at Milan and Pavia. In his painting the result is not really happy: his figures are twisted and restless, challenging in their forced anatomy yet not drawn perfectly enough to sustain the challenge. He introduces classical architecture, makes his pictures more three-dimensional than the typical Sienese, fills his whole space after their manner yet cannot muster enough power of composition to fill it pleasingly. The *Nativity* or the crowded *Coronation of the Virgin* at the Siena Academy show us this effect, and give us the measure of his success and failure. They indicate, too, that Siena had at last turned her eyes away from her own art of pure worship and decorative narrative.

At the beginning of the new century, when Cardinal Piccolomini was endowing a library and a chapel at the cathedral it was Pinturicchio, from Umbria, who was called to decorate it. Siena no longer boasted a painter of her own.

SODOMA (1477–1549) The art of Sodoma, who came to the city in 1501, has nothing to do with that of the place, although it gave impetus to painting there. He had studied under Leonardo at Milan, having been born in Piedmont, but he brought little of Leonardo's subtlety, and his work remains pompous and sentimental. His life acquired a scandalous notoriety from Vasari's reports, but Vasari was not the most reliable of chroniclers. It seems probable that Sodoma modelled his conduct largely upon that of Leonardo, echoing in eccentricity that greater spirit's genius. So we learn that he kept a number of horses, and that he filled his house with strange pets. He seems, by a turn for practical joking, to have kept in the public eye, and to have jeopardised his reputation by his injudicious

conduct. But these matters of gossip have nothing to do with his performance in art; unless, indeed, the superficial brilliance of his art be regarded as the reflection of his character. The sentimentality of it placed him in high repute with generations earlier than our own. His *Christ in Limbo* (Siena Academy) with its famous figure of Eve had a wide notoriety, as did his *Christ Bound to the Pillar*, and his *Vision of S. Catherine* with the swooning figure of the Saint at the church of S. Domenico in that city. The Uffizi has his well-known *S. Sebastian* and the National Gallery a *Head of Christ*. Everything he did achieved a certain level of prowess: what we miss is precisely that quality which Siena should have been able to give him—the earnestness which makes an artist a seer.

Two or three men tried to draw inspiration from the newcomer: Beccafumi, Girolamo del Pacchia, Andrea Brescianino, Pietro Sorri, were among them; but the impetus had died, and Sienese art never really came into the 16th century. For two hundred years it had lived on the marvellous legacy which Duccio, Martini and the Lorenzetti had bequeathed; now at last the treasure was spent, and the wealth of art remained elsewhere than in the Tuscan hill-town which had once rivalled Florence.

FLORENCE AND THE CULT OF HUMANISM

I

From Cimabue to Fra Angelico

In culture as in arms Florence stands opposed to Siena. She is for progress as against conservatism; and it is not too much to say that the history of the rise of humanism in Italy is almost the history of Florentine thought. The culmination of that movement had other centres—Rome and Venice and Milan, the universities at Padua and Bologna, and such enlightened courts as that of the Este family at Ferrara or the Gonzagas at Mantua —but in its beginnings the new thought was in overwhelming degree initiated by Florence. Dante and Cavalcanti and Boccaccio in letters stand at that beginning; with Villani, one of the first modern historians; with Latini, philosopher and scientist of sorts; with a crowd of lesser men. No other city could boast such a galaxy. Rome, in the temporary absence of the Papacy at Avignon during this important period, was of no account; and the advantages of this first advance were never lost to Florence until the powerful Popes of the 16th century made Rome the centre, calling the great Florentine artists there.

Politically Florence was eternally in turmoil. Wars with neighbouring communes went on alongside the

terrific faction fights of her own families, each secure in its towered fortress-palace over her narrow streets. Guelphs and Ghibellines first, and then Black and White Guelphs struggled for power; democracy and aristocracy found themselves continually opposed under these and other banners. Yet withal Florence found time to practise great art, and to accumulate riches. She dominated the Tuscan cities, built her baptistery, her cathedral, her campanile and many of her magnificent churches, whilst her merchant princes and monastic orders erected a hundred other noble buildings. It is a period of unprecedented activity in every department of life. We realise, as we read its chronicles, how thrillingly men were living out the doctrines of the new humanistic philosophy, and it would have been impossible for art to do other than record the spirit of the time. Moreover, as ever, art was the expression of the most sensitive and virile minds and helped to create this tendency as well as to reflect it.

Painting was necessarily at the beginning closely allied to architecture and sculpture. We find the artists taking it for granted that their tasks included the designing of great buildings and the execution of sculpture for their adornment, as well as the decoration of their walls with frescoes and the creation of altar-pieces. The older methods of inlay with mosaic had sufficed to make the decoration and icons of earlier churches, but now that this superabundant life demanded some expression the greater freedom of painting became imperative. The work at Assisi gave the movement emphasis, partly because the S. Francis legends with which they were decorating his church were almost contemporary and thus invited the reflection of contemporary life, partly because they had no traditional attitudes or symbology to hold them back in set forms. What happened there

in marked degree, happened in every place where men were painting; and chief of all, at Florence, where thought was so intensely alive. As so often occurs, one original mind focussing this time spirit established the form; and the first hundred years of Florentine painting were really the record of the power of Giotto and his followers through two or three generations.

This first period is still consciously a religious art devoted entirely to the service of the Church in telling its stories in picture language and in creating icons to stimulate worship at the altars. It is subconsciously humanistic art devoted to the record of the fascination of life. Philosophically and as a chronicle of changing human thought, it is a study of the interaction of those forces; from Cimabue, who stood with one hand stretched to the pure Byzantine, until Fra Angelico, who, belonging in date to the second era of Renaissance art, yet had his spiritual home in this earlier fascinating century.

CIMABUE (1240–1302)

This story of Florentine art has long been regarded as starting with Cimabue, and certainly his is the earliest great name of an individual master of whose work we have sufficient quantity to form judgment. Old Bartolommeo of Florence, and Tafi the mosaic worker, and Margaritone of Arezzo, each in his own way showed some slight loosening of the old stiff art; but whilst Duccio was feeling out for a more naturalistic form at Siena, Cimabue —a trifle more doubtfully as became an older man— was doing the same at Florence. There is a story that he painted a *Madonna in Majesty* at Pisa which was the forerunner of Duccio's at Pisa, but the picture is lost, and we are in a world of legends with these early artists. Vasari, the biographer, was a strong Cimabue partisan.

He gave the story of the carrying of Duccio's Majestas through the streets to Cimabue, associating it with the Madonna of the Rucellai Chapel; now both story and the Madonna itself are given back to Duccio and to Siena. But maybe the ancient rivalry of the two towns caused Florence to honour its own great painter as Siena had done; his noble and monumental *Virgin Enthroned*, which we now find in the Uffizi, would have been worthy the honour. In our modern scepticism of legends there is even a doubt cast upon the delightful story of Cimabue's discovery of the shepherd lad Giotto drawing his sheep, with its sequel of his taking Giotto into his studio. But that may stand; it is too good to be untrue, and even though to-day we see Giotto deriving as much from the Roman master Cavallini as from Cimabue, we will not be cheated of our romance.

Cimabue worked under the Byzantine decorators on the great new church which was being built in 13th century Florence, S. Maria Novella. We can imagine him a little impatient of the stiff forms which they created, for his own work shows the desire to loosen its line, to break up its flat colour, to give greater pictorial and human qualities. Change is necessarily a slow business, and Cimabue tried to unite the old style with the new rather than really to work innovations. Thus his Madonnas are still icon figures, larger in size, stiffer in gesture and drapery, more remote than the subsidiary angels.

In 1294 he was called to the decorating of the church at Assisi, which was then the rallying ground of the new thought. S. Francis had humanised religion; it was poetic justice that much of the humanising of art should be shown in his church. At Assisi Cimabue shows himself freer than elsewhere from the old traditions.

The *Calvary*, with its frank emotion, its weeping figures, is a new note. The *Four Evangelists* and the *Scenes from the Apocalypse* were also Cimabue's work. All this painting at Assisi belongs to the last three years of the artist's life. Just into the new century we see him at Pisa working on the apse, putting in that figure of *S. John* which stands challengingly against the highly formalised Byzantine Christ; and it was at Pisa that he died.

So he stands between the old art and the new, trying to achieve more truly pictorial effects in tone and colour, more human persons, but never daring quite to abandon conservative methods.

In the National Gallery *Madonna* (either definitely his or by his immediate school) we can trace these influences at strife. But in this, as in the Louvre *Madonna* and the fine Uffizi one, Byzantine art wins. It is at Assisi in the *Madonna with Angels* and in the *Crucifixion* that we have more evidence of the new light which was to lighten the next generation of artists.

Before turning to that generation in the person of Giotto, we must in justice glance aside at a master from Rome whom some modern critics regard as being the great formative influence upon the Tuscan pioneer, although for centuries we have reversed the position. This is PIETRO CAVALLINI (1259–1344). The Roman painters had the advantage of the remains of the classic art in the wall paintings, the sculptures, the Christian mosaics, which had been executed before art had stiffened under Eastern influences. When, with the general broadening of mind of the 13th century, they inclined to reform, they had these models to hand; and a group of mosaicists and fresco painters arose in Rome, artists

such as the Cosmati, who began to move very nervously away from the old art.

Cavallini, the decorator of the churches of S. Maria and S. Cecilia in the Trastevere quarter in Rome, carried this tendency into a new dimension. He commenced to build up his figures in sculpturesque light and shade; to wrestle (awkwardly enough be it granted) with problems of realistic placing of the figures, to impart nature and humanity. It was all very cold and academic, but it led along the way of story-telling which, at the decorating of the churches at Assisi, was to prove the avenue for Italian painting. Some would have it that this Cavallini was the master who painted the fine Isaac frescoes there; but whether this be so, or whether they are the work of some other master influenced by his school; whether Giotto first came into touch with such work at Assisi or had studied these Roman decorators when he was in Rome, one needs but glance to see how much he owes to their clean line and their story-telling art.

GIOTTO (1266–1337)

So through Cimabue, on the one hand, and the known and unknown masters of the Roman school on the other, we come to this real beginning of the Renaissance and the greatest figure of the 13th century. Ambrogiotto Bondone was born in the mountain country of Vespignano, went to Florence as a pupil of Cimabue, with whom we may assume he journeyed to Assisi. Around the end of the century we find him variously at Assisi in touch with the masters of the Roman school, and at Rome itself, where he produced the mosaic of *Christ Walking on the Waters*. This work has been removed so often, alas, that we can no longer regard it as his, save in design.

It was at Padua that Giotto was to find himself, in that barrel-shaped little church which Enrico Scrovegni was giving in the hope (a faint one, if Dante may be taken as authority) of redeeming his father's soul from purgatory. The Franciscan stories themselves, as we have seen, made for modernity. Moreover, at Padua Giotto was to meet Giovanni Pisano the sculptor, and Dante, the man who was doing for literature what he had in mind to do for art. Thus all the elements were brought together; concise, clean draughtsmanship gleaned in Rome, the sense of nobility in design which came from his training under Cimabue, a humanity which was the influence of the Franciscan atmosphere of Assisi, Dante's liberal-minded thinking, and a sculpturesque understanding of masses and of human poise which we dare to connect with Giovanni Pisano. Magnificently Giotto transmuted them into the pure gold of art. As the centuries passed other men were to perfect the means, but no man went relatively so far as he did.

In 1305 the Chapel in the Arena at Padua was consecrated. There was probably still much to be done, for we learn that they borrowed wonderful cloths from S. Mark's at Venice, and we may assume that it was to cover the yet undecorated spaces. Giotto, therefore, would have stayed on there, continuing his friendship with Dante. We believe that he visited Avignon and Southern France about 1309, and in 1312 he was back at Assisi, working in a more complex vein at the vaulting of the lower church. His first inventiveness had passed: here he tried new experiments with the difficult spaces. From this time, save for a visit to Naples and a journey to Milan, Giotto belongs to Florence. He did the chapels and altar-pieces for S. Croce; at some time he did for

the Ognisanti that *Dormition of the Virgin*, which is a treasure of the Berlin Gallery; at another the civic frescoes for the Bargello which inspired Lorenzetti at Siena, and into which he worked a portrait of his friend Dante, whom Florence had exiled. Giotto's great honour came when Florence appointed him *capomaestro* of the building of the cathedral, and he was enabled to design and begin his lovely campanile. It was typical of Giotto's mentality that he should plan (perhaps he actually carved) the reliefs at the base representing the crafts: Giotto was the true humanist, and man in action interested him more than remote Deity or saints in glory. In 1337 he died, an old man of more than seventy years, but Italian art had been born, and its feet set in the way which for six centuries the art of the world followed without swerving.

During that long life Giotto had travelled much in Italy, and had trained many assistants. He had created models of art to which, through the next two centuries at least, men turned for study. He had placed art for ever beyond the reach of Byzantinism. When we compare the position of painting at the beginning of his life with that to which he carried it, we appreciate something of the amazing genius of the man.

But it is not only relatively that his accomplishment is so fine; the paintings themselves have an ineffaceable beauty. Giotto invented a kind of shorthand of line and mass which expressed at once his story. With no scientific knowledge of anatomy nor of perspective, he made his creations convincingly alive. His pure line and the poise or gesture of the figures gave not only dramatic power to his narration, but that sense of mass and bulk which we have learned to ask of a picture. With it all he never lost dignity. It was his innate sense

of composition, that use of architecture to knit his pictures together, that restraint in placing the figures, which conveys to us that this man has done just what he wishes, no less, no more, so that we feel him to be the master of his medium. He has the power that can stop short of exuberance; yet there is none of the cold academic feeling of the Roman school in which he learned one part of his lesson, for Giotto never creates a figure which is not marked by some loving human touch.

For so early a master the world is rich in works. We are not now so dogmatic in our claims as once we were, realising that much would have been produced by assistants and imitators, but the frescoes at Padua, those at Assisi and the S. Croce chapels tell of Giotto's genius in Italy. Three authentic panel pictures painted on wood remain to us: the *Madonna* in the Uffizi, a *Crucifix* in the sacristry of the Arena Chapel at Padua, and the *Dormition* at Berlin. The Louvre possesses an altar-piece painted for Pisa; the subject, *S. Francis receiving the Stigmata*, being one we frequently meet at Giotto's hands. England is without a single work by him, and only his influence upon his immediate disciples and followers can be studied here in the works of Orcagna and the lesser painters who stand between this giant of the 13th century and Fra Angelico, whose work comes well into the fifteenth.

With the passing of Giotto, art inevitably halted—the genius of the master had stepped forward too far. Nevertheless, among his immediate disciples, although not a pupil, there is one whose power of draughtsmanship, allied to a somewhat macabre imagination, created a fine artist.

ORCAGNA (1308–1368) Andrea di Cione, as his name was, we have learned to call by the abbreviation of *Arcagnuolo*, the archangel, which his contemporaries bestowed upon him. Orcagna was one of the all-round artist-craftsmen of his time. Sculptor, goldsmith and architect he was, and also sonneteer and student. Thus, at Florence, we have an example of his quality as architect in the lovely Loggia di Lanzi, and as sculptor in the magnificent tabernacle at Or S. Michele. We used to ascribe to him the frescoes of the *Triumph of Death* and the *Last Judgment* at Pisa in the Campo Santo, but these are now generally accorded to a Sienese artist. However, in the fragment of a fresco undoubtedly by him at S. Croce, in Florence, we have that intensely human and dramatic idea of the poor pleading to Death, who will not heed them but passes on to sweep down the rich and happy. The two other imposing paintings which were once given entirely to Orcagna—the *Last Judgment* and the *Paradise* of the Strozzi chapel of S. Maria Novella, are rather family affairs, for his brother, NARDO DI CIONE, did most of the work, although Orcagna may have been responsible for the scheme. He himself did the upper part of the *Last Judgment* and the very lovely altar-piece, however; and these, with the glorious altar which he did for S. Pietro Maggiore and which is now one of the great treasures of the National Gallery, are his outstanding works as a painter. His drapery is noteworthy; it derives from his training as a sculptor under Andrea Pisano rather than from Giotto's clear, hard line. Nevertheless, Giotto had his part in the development of Orcagna, and the combination of epic grandeur and humanism with its hint of indebtedness both to him and

to Dante makes Orcagna an outstanding painter during the dull period which followed Giotto's own days.

TADDEO GADDI (1300–1366) Foremost among Giotto's direct pupils stands his godson, Taddeo Gaddi. Poor Taddeo was perhaps too apt a pupil, for wherever he is really good the themes, the methods, everything is a mélange of the master. His series of frescoes in the Baroncelli chapel at S. Croce are typical, their Giottoësque architecture and figures endowed with fine qualities of colour and chiaroscuro, and a distribution of matter which gives them a true decorative sense, but somewhere that dignity and spiritual grace of the earlier artist had disappeared. Gaddi was a fine tempera colourist, and his panels in this medium are to be met with in many galleries, but the frescoes at S. Croce are his outstanding achievement, and in particular that of the *Dedication of the Virgin*. One anecdote of him indicates that at least he had critical discernment, for it is recorded that at a forgathering of artists at S. Miniato in 1360, when the discussion veered to the dangerous question of who was the best artist, Gaddi dismissed the claims with a pessimistic pronouncement: "These are very able painters, but art is dying every day." It was apparently true. His own son, AGNOLO GADDI (1343–1396), who decorated the choir at S. Croce with a series of frescoes telling the story of the True Cross, moved out a little more toward pictorial realism, gave us more figures, more architecture, more incident, more landscape, but lost some of the constraint and dignity which had characterised the painting earlier in the century. In rival Siena they seemed capable of mastering this more elaborate story-telling without losing the quality of spirit,

but these later 14th century Florentines sacrificed the soul for the body, and Agnolo's sprightly narrative belong to the decadence.

Yet another father and son, both lesser artists, came from Giotto's bottega. BERNARDO DADDI, the father, was a prolific artist, preferring to work on a small scale, and being drawn to the Gothic manner of the Sienese rather than to the direct movement of Florentine art. He is full of ornamental detail, is a good colourist, and in his own miniaturist manner a pleasant painter of panels and triptyches. The work of his son, DADDO DADDI, is in this same manner, but heavier and less understanding of the grace necessary for this Gothic style.

Among the pupils of Giotto were two or three painters whose work, inextricably mixed, has been ascribed to Tomasso di Stefano, who was assumed to be nicknamed GIOTTINO. In truth the name probably includes STEFANO, his son GIOTTO DI STEFANO, and another pupil of the master, MASO. The lovely altar-piece of the *Disposition* now in the Uffizi was probably Maso's; its exquisite grouping, restraint, and fine composition betokens a good artist. Of Stefano, legend has it that he was a better artist than Giotto, and that he added qualities of naturalism which were only to reappear in the next century; but the legend cannot be confirmed, for we have practically no work extant, and must therefore depend upon this opinion of Ghiberti and Vasari. His son, Giottino, so far as we can with certainty identify his work, showed rather the influence of Giotto himself than of this newer naturalism; but the story of his life is of a melancholy man dying early of consumption, leaving us a number of pictures in the dramatic linear manner of the first master.

The rest of the "Giottoësque"—the painters in whose hands the vital urge of Giotto modified by the story-telling of the Sienese drifted down to comparative insignificance—are not of sufficient greatness to hold us back in this dying 14th century. Giovanni di Milano, Spinelli Aretino (now credited with the two *Heads of Saints* in the National Gallery, long ascribed to Giotto himself), Antonio Veneziano, the three generations of the Bicci family, carried the tradition into the 15th century. But this was cul-de-sac. In the meantime Masaccio was born in 1401, and although he died when he was but twenty-seven art was as surely resuscitated with his work as it had been with that of Giotto more than a hundred years before.

Before we turn to that new chapter in Florentine art, however, we must halt with a master and his greater pupil who seem to stand apart, scarcely belonging to their time or the Giottoësque development, yet, by paradox, expressing that time better than any of those of whom we have spoken. The master is Don Lorenzo Monaco; the pupil, Fra Angelico.

DON LORENZO MONACO (1370–1425) We are but beginning to realise how fine an artist this Camaldolese monk was. He has hitherto received bare mention as the master of Fra Angelico. With his pupil he seems to stand a little outside time and place. His work, executed at a time when Masaccio and Donatello had made their advance into the High Renaissance, belongs rather to the Gothic miniaturist art of the previous century; moreover, despite its production in Florence, its spiritual home is Siena, the Siena of Simone Martini. Thus it has nothing to do with the reckless

Florence of the Frenchified modes of life adopted in the desperate unbelief which followed the Great Plague of 1348. Don Lorenzo was a man of the cloister; life outside went too fast for him, and his art is reactionary, turning for correction of this fever to Siena, his own birthplace.

It is said of him, as of his pupil, that his life was austere and that his religion was an ecstasy. In face of the expression of that mind which we have in his work the report seems indisputable. Its first characteristic is purity of colour, for in the medium of tempera he made an advance, using semi-opaque glazes to attain an opalescent effect, which is very lovely. This purity of colour, the restrained richness of design, the very lines, reveal an aristocrat of the spirit: there is something fastidious about his art, yet no sign of weakness Indeed, at the Museum of S. Marco, in Florence, where one goes for the Fra Angelico paintings, one of the strongest works, noticeable for its fine drawing and sense of character, is the great picture by Lorenzo Monaco, which contains a portrait of Fra Angelico himself. Again, in the Academy there are some fascinating studies of saints posed against rocks; or in the Trinita church there is the exquisite *Annunciation*, with a delicately conceived girlish Madonna worthy to stand alongside Fra Angelico's own more noted picture on the subject. But it is in the Uffizi that Lorenzo's great ancona, the *Coronation of the Virgin*, proclaims him a master. The star-strewn bands of gold and blue, the swaying lines of the adoring saints, the incarnate purity of the Virgin, make a radiant composition in its graceful Gothic frame, with its storied predella. In the National Gallery are a series of his pictures which will convey something of his power; but wherever they are to be found Don

Lorenzo's paintings should be sought, not alone that he was the teacher of Fra Angelico, but that he is himself a glorious artist.

FRA ANGELICO (1387–1455) Devotional painting reached its apotheosis in Lorenzo's famous pupil, Fra Giovanni of Fiesole, who, because of the beauty and holiness of his life, men called "Fra Angelico," and "Beato," the blessed. The legend of his life is of a piece with his art. He was twenty years of age when he entered the Dominican monastery at Fiesole in 1407, and we may assume that he began work as a manuscript illuminator, and painted many of the smaller pictures which we find by him in the Academy at Florence. That his growing artistic powers and fine life earned him renown, there can be no doubt, for when Cosimo de Medico called Michelozzo to rebuild the convent of S. Marco in Florence and caused the Pope to give it over to the Fiesole monks, it was Fra Angelico whom he commissioned to decorate its walls. For nine years he laboured there with his assistants, and it is only at S. Marco that we can really study Fra Angelico; modifying our conclusions, as we shall see, before his later work in the S. Niccolo Chapel at the Vatican.

In 1445 Pope Eugenius called him to Rome. We can imagine that the painter, who was later to decline the bishopric of Florence with the excuse that "he who practises the art of painting has need of quiet, and should live without cares and anxieties," had little liking for existence at the Papal palace, and we find him leaving Rome shortly afterwards, working this time at Orvieto. But his work there was unfinished, for with the ascension of Pope Nicholas V. to the pontificate he was recalled

to Rome to decorate the chapel in the Vatican. In Rome in 1455 he died, and it may be justly said that Gothic religious art ended with his work.

The approach to that work must necessarily be a two-fold one as his own was, despite his single-mindedness. Its first claim and immediate appeal is in its spirit. No artist before or since has so depicted the beauty of holiness, the passionless calm of the spiritual life. Someone has called him "the S. John of Art"; and for all that he was a Dominican there is something Franciscan in his simple fervour. We do not need to know the legend of his life of loving-kindness, his refusal ever to take money for his pictures, nor the story that he never took his brush in hand but with prayer, nor painted the scenes of the Passion save with tears: his pictures breathe these things. The soul of the devotee comes into the art. It expressed itself best in the creation of the heavens, wherein his thoughts dwelt, and of those radiant beings, shadowless, clothed in pure colour, aureoled with gold, making music we can almost hear which are the essence of Fra Angelico. The enthroned virgins in radiant golden skies, the worshipping hosts of the blest, the flowerful fields of Paradise, all these things are depicted with a conviction which not even the mystically-minded Sienese painters had achieved before, and no man attempted afterwards. Looking at them, one must remember that his language is a language of symbols, and that his colours even had a strict meaning to his audience. From Don Lorenzo he had learned a brilliant use of those colours—pure, bright, flat tones which gave the other-worldliness to these exquisite conceptions. It is said that he never altered his designs nor worked over them, arriving at them by meditation, and asserting that they were the "will of God."

Such an idealised art and such a method has its own shortcomings. Its range is limited, its figures needed to present no complexity of human movement nor emotion, and tended to become idealised abstractions, and thus to lose drawing. (It is said that the Fra held it as sinful to study from the nude, but there is at Dresden a drawing of a nude child by him.) Anyway, the danger of sentimental and weak drawing would lie in this method; and much of the enthusiasm for his work has been uncritical enthusiasm for this expression of his pietism. His actual art form in this phase is reactionary for his period.

The second aspect of his art, and one which we shall wrong him by overlooking, is almost a contradiction of this first, being the purely technical achievement of a Florentine painter on the direct road of artistic evolution. Against the 14th century pietist we must weight the 15th century realist. As such he follows closely the advance of architecture of his day, and incorporates in his work every one of Michelozzo's innovations; as such he studies the new movement which was stirring Florence under the artistic spell of Masaccio and Donatello. He deliberately rejects the heavy shadows of the new painting, fearing to dull his colours; but his perspective, his chiaroscuro, the real skies and practical architecture which he introduces when he abandons the golden background of the earlier masters, and his early adoption of Masaccio's discoveries in aerial perspective, prove that the cloistered monk was alive to the artistic progress in the world outside. He is, too, a landscape painter of no mean order. True, his landscapes are of the monastery garden, whether they be the meads of Paradise or the garden wherein the Risen Christ appears to Mary Magdalene; but it is gay with well-observed flowers and trees, and in the *Deposition* at

the Uffizi there is a distant landscape of mountains and clouds, a middle distance of trees, and a foreground with characteristic flower forms among the grass which no artist of his time could have surpassed. Again, in the magnificent *Crucifixion* in S. Marco, his sky with its leaden clouds above and the great orange streak near the horizon, is not only well observed naturalistically, but subserves his symbolic intention, evoking the idea of that night of mankind's hope; and yet again it serves his æsthetic purpose by giving an excellent contrast of light figures against darkness, and solid ones against the light.

All this is to say that Fra Angelico, whether his inspiration came from prayer or hard study, was an excellent artist, very aware of the forces which were making for fine work at his date. His anatomy was his weakest point, but even this he disguises by the good proportion of his figures, and by a power over the forms of drapery; his drawing of architecture and its perspective is studiously good; his chiaroscuro, as we have seen in the *Crucifixion*, is dramatic and excellent; and his sense of decoration, learned so well under Lorenzo, never deserted him.

In the Nicholas Chapel at Rome we have the high-water mark of this work in accordance with 15th century artistic evolution. At S. Marco, working for the Dominican brethren, he had been able to use the very simplest means to convey his ideas; they spoke the same language. In Rome, complexity was more in demand to satisfy his more sophisticated masters. His treatment of the chapel walls is masterly along the new lines. His sense of colour still serves, his design yields a wonderful control over the wall and vaulting spaces at his command, and only an artist who had studied the newly-discovered arts of perspective and mastered his draughtsmanship

could have created that fine series of narrative paintings. In the light of this second approach to Fra Angelico, therefore, this work at Rome is the climax of his art; in the light of the primary concern with him as a mystic it is anti-climax.

Fra Angelico's works must be studied in these two manifestations at Rome and Florence. A negligible few are in the great galleries of the world. The National Gallery possesses five panels from a predella, exquisite in his early manner; the Louvre possesses a real masterpiece in the *Coronation of the Virgin*, and two smaller pictures. But in Florence, at S. Marco, at the Academy, in the Uffizi we can really know the mystic painter whose earthly eyes seemed to see the veritable fields under the golden skies of Paradise; and at Rome we can estimate his place as one of the pioneer student-painters of the High Renaissance.

II

From Masaccio to Botticelli

THE opening of the 15th century found the art of the Florentines in the depth of that decline which had followed the high achievement of Giotto. They had that little knowledge which proved a dangerous thing, and it had destroyed their heaven without yet putting them safely upon the earth. When the century opened Masaccio was unborn, Fra Angelico but a lad of thirteen, and the older generation of artists were producing nothing noteworthy. Well might old Taddeo Gaddi utter his Jeremiads.

With the new century came new life, and, strangely, it came to painting not from the painters but from the sculptors and architects. Ghiberti, Donatello, Brunelleschi: the three great names stand at the head of the period. They had the passion for exact knowledge, the determination to win from nature and from the antique the secrets of great art; and it was this determination which marked the splendid second period of Florentine art. Hear Ghiberti, winner of the competition for the Gates of the Baptistery: "Thus I have always sought for first principles, as to how nature works in herself and how I may approach her; how the eye knows the variety of things, how our visual power works, how visual images come about, and in what manner the theory of sculpture and painting should be framed." That is the veritable *credo* of this second period. See Donatello and Brunelleschi digging among the ruins of Rome for pieces of the

antique; or Brunelleschi tramping sixty miles from Florence to Cortona to see a newly unearthed statue. It is knowledge they want; and the whole spirit of the century was this of research so far as Florence was concerned. We find Masaccio solving problems of perspective, naturalism in tone and atmosphere; Uccello, Ghiberti's pupil, giving his life to the study of perspective; Piero della Francesca, another pupil, getting new laws of tone and composition; Pollaiuolo studying the body in violent action; Filippo Lippi going to the Florentine people for his models; until, at the end of the century, Luca Signorelli, uniting these studies of his predecessors, made the direct path for the sublime masters of the third period, Michel Angelo and Leonardo.

This second phase, therefore, is the period of development. In painting it starts quietly with two pupils of Ghiberti—Uccello and Masolino—and then, with a rush of genius, takes us to Masaccio, who, in less than a decade of active artistry, blazed the trail.

UCCELLO (1397–1475)

"Paolo Uccello" they called him because of his love of the birds, but if ever a man had one passion it was his for the study of perspective. He concentrated on that scientific search for the truth of linear perspective, which had been one of his studies in Ghiberti's studio, until his name became a byword and a legend. Stories are told of how his wife would call him to bed at midnight, only to hear his murmured "How wonderful is divine perspective"; and Vasari records how Donatello, his friend, warned him that he was losing the substance for the shadow by his quaint experiments. Since the one in question was the delineation of "a head fillet with squares drawn in perspective from divers aspects; spheres with seventy-two

diamond facets, with wood shavings wound round sticks on each facet, and other fantastic devices," the warning sounds reasonable. Nevertheless, it was just this search for exact scientific knowledge which spelled the progress of painting in those days; and Uccello, for all that he was written down an eccentric and a failure by his neighbours, was a real influence. Mantegna, of Padua, the great exponent of the art, owed much of his enthusiasm to a visit from Uccello, and it was rather as an influence and a scientific pioneer than as a painter that we first think of this quaint Paolo, living on until nearly his eightieth year in ceaseless research and experiment. Few great commissions were given to him during that long life. The most noteworthy were the decoration of the lunettes in the cloister of S. Maria Novella, and one for four battle pictures for the Medici Palace.

Glancing at any picture by Uccello it is difficult to think of him as belonging to his own century; we might easily imagine it to be the work of a modern decorative artist with a feeling for clean, bright colour in a kind of mosaic, a modern passion for dissonances of orange, russet and green, an effect almost of tapestry being gained by the use of touches of bold colour. Uccello loved the lines of the lances with which he largely built up his battle pictures; they gave him his chance for foreshortening. He tended rather to square up his figures and horses to enable him the better to organise his grouping, and everywhere he went out of his way to create difficulties in his beloved perspective. This sense of decoration, combined with virtuosity, did not make for realism. Indeed, when, in 1432, he painted the *San Romano*, which we find in the National Gallery, it was the first deliberate decoration in the new sense—decoration based on knowledge, and deliberate in its intention. His interest was

neither in religion nor nature, but in sheer artistic dexterity; and for this, rather than for the squared-up style of his forms, we might dare to call him the first Cubist. Necessarily we lose some life: there is a kind of petrifaction about his work; but its beauty of decorative line and colour compensates. He has a characteristic grey-green which comes into most of his painting. We note it especially in the cloister of S. Maria Novella, and because of the medium of *terra verde* in which his frescoes there are conceived, it gained the name of the Green Cloister.

This set of frescoes in Florence are Uccello's most important work. We must notice also the fine tomb portrait of *Sir John Hawkswood* in the Duomo there, observing how well Uccello's studies in perspective stood him in stead in making an almost three-dimensional effect in this masterpiece. The *Battle* in the National Gallery and companion pictures in the Louvre and Uffizi give us excellent specimens of his style, with the decorative value of the patterned lances and the characteristic juxtaposition of daring colours.

Before we turn to Masaccio, whose name stands imposingly at the beginning of 15th century Florentine painting because of his work in the Brancacci Chapel, we must consider the man who started the work there.

MASOLINO (1383–1447) Masolino, of Panicale in Umbria, can scarcely be called a Florentine save for his work on this Brancacci Chapel, and even of this it is matter for dispute whether we have any extant to-day. Until recently he was credited with three or four of the frescoes, but it is more probable that his work was in the vaults and lunettes and has been

destroyed, so that those attributed to him are really early Masaccio's. Nothing there is typical of his style, and it is elsewhere than in Florence that we must search for the undoubted works of this master who glanced, now backward at Gothic narrative art, now forward to the newer realists. We find his work in Castiglione near Milan; in Budapest, where he went to work for the Florentine exile, Pippo Spano; and chief of all, in Rome, in the Basilica of S. Clemente.

Although he commenced on the Brancacci Chapel, and although there was much to be done there after the early death of Masaccio, Masolino was not invited back, or at least did not go. The truth probably is that even the worst of the frescoes are by the youthful Masaccio, whilst the best from his more practised hand placed the work far beyond the reach of the older master.

We know little of Masolino's life other than the fact of his travels. His art, uncertain in its quality, has more charm than strength. He is a good colourist, and at the end of his career a good narrator. His composition is weak, for he can be terribly diffuse, placing his interest all over the picture as in the *Baptism of Christ* at Castiglione, where a group of young men dressing takes the eye at one point, the distant river valley leads it to another, a group of onlookers claim attention at another, and we come near to missing the centre of interest. Those young men are the best effort in anatomy we have from Masolino. Elsewhere (and later, we have reason to fear) he can put heads upon shoulders with but little aid of necks, covering his defects by the white fur capes we so often find in his pictures, or by long loose costumes hiding the loss of anatomy in his slender figures. His architectural accessories take us back to earlier Gothic story-tellers.

But, for all his faults, he manages to convey a gay, colourful life with a certain naïveté, and his women have a very human charm. In the later works at S. Clemente he got his powers both of composition and of narrative into focus: we know where to look for the interest even though he is still too concerned with adventitious detail.

In one matter, perhaps because he was a traveller, perhaps because he was Umbrian born, he brings fresh vision: his open-air landscapes. His mountains are real mountains, and in the fine *Crucifixion* at S. Clemente we have a grey sky which is the result of observation and not of tradition. His works in fresco have to be studied in the buildings where he painted them. At Castiglione near Milan, where we particularly note the *Baptism;* at Rome where we have the *Calvary;* at Naples, where there is an excellent diptych; and at Budapest. Whether in the Brancacci Chapel we have his frescoes or only his influence upon the greater Masaccio, must remain one of the problems of this early Florentine art.

MASACCIO (1401–1428) Masaccio, whose real name was Tommaso Guidi, in his short life of but twenty-seven years carried art so far forward that we might name him the father of naturalistic painting. Before his coming it had struggled to emancipate itself from symbolism. Ghiberti showed the way of perspective and anatomy, and applied mathematics and geometry to design and the imitation of nature. His pupil, Masolino, commenced those frescoes in the Brancacci Chapel of the Carmine Church at Florence; and Masaccio, taking over the work, accomplished it so marvellously that they became the model for the greatest artists of the Renaissance. These frescoes thus

mark the beginning of an era in painting as the Ghiberti Gates do in sculpture.

In character Masaccio was notoriously slovenly and careless, troubling so little about money that he never bothered to collect his dues, and died deeply in debt. There is a legend that he was killed in a street fight in Rome, but all we really know of him was that he was an unsocial man with a passion for his art.

The characteristic method of his painting is a kind of blurred monochrome from which colours emerge. There are no hard contour lines, but a strong assertion of light and dark. His advance in the art of his time was chiefly due to the fact that he had introduced the idea of aerial perspective into painting, realising and depicting the truth that distant objects are not only smaller in appearance but are less clearly defined because of the thickness of the veil of air between. Also he allied the studies of anatomy and perspective, foreshortening in particular the feet, and placing them on the ground. His third innovation was the abolition of the use of line, painting in masses of colour and tone in juxtaposition to get an effect truly like nature. These three principles were revolutionary in his day, and they held good as the principles of art until the coming of the Impressionists late last century. By their inauguration he was truly the father of realism.

His greatest works are those in the Brancacci Chapel. The study of these frescoes has recently been made more possible by skilful cleaning, and as we look at the *Tribute Money*, or the *Expulsion from Eden*, and consider their dignity, their dramatic power, and their realism as against anything which preceded Masaccio's date, we realise how high a place this master holds in the hierarchy of painters. The National Gallery is fortunate

in possessing one fine example, the *Madonna Enthroned*, with all Masaccio's strength and monumental dignity.

While Masaccio worked at his frescoes in the Carmine, the monastery took in a boy of genius who, if he did not actually receive lessons from the young master, was strongly influenced by him.

FILIPPO LIPPI (1406–1469) diverted the intellectual and rugged realism of Masaccio into grace and charm. He depicted the human, breathing life of Florence; his Madonnas were its pretty girls, his saints the flourishing *bourgeoise* Florentines who became the patrons of art under the benevolent autocracy of the Medici. He was the first Italian painter thus to introduce the ordinary people into his art, partly because he himself was interested in drawing them, partly that the *nouveaux riches* demanded to figure in the pictures for which they paid. So for half a century the patron and his family intrude into the picture as characters (in Lippo's hands usually as a crowd looking on at the event depicted).

Filippo Lippi's life story accumulated romance. Truly there was little of the monk about him, and he ran away with a nun, was excused his monastic vows and became a husband and a father. He died at Spoleto, whence he had gone to work on the apse of the cathedral. Browning's famous poem in "Men and Women" is a just estimation of his characteristics as a man and an artist.

His painting is especially noteworthy for the subtlety of its colouring. The simple tones and colours of the early masters gave place to the breaking of one tone into another, one colour into another, making for sóftness,

delicacy and richness. This, and the humanising charm of it, the studied detail and concern for small things makes him feel very sophisticated for his period. It lays him open also to the charge of sentimentality, and of abandoning the nobler style which masters like Masaccio had followed. It brought art one degree nearer to earth and popularity. He was one of the first artists in Italy to paint in oil, which made for the qualities of richness in his style.

Among his best works are the *Coronation of the Virgin* and the *Virgin Adoring*, in the Uffizi. In this latter we have a subject which is a favourite with Filippo Lippi: the Child lying on the ground, the lovely young Mother on her knees worshipping, with all the typically Lippi accessories of flowers and beautiful draperies, and an attendant S. John who looks capable of any boyish mischief. The same subject, with slight variations, is in Berlin, and indeed, can often be met with in Lippi's work. At Prato, in the Collegiate, there are some fine things by the master, including his *Herod's Feast*, full of detailed observation of youthful life. The National Gallery has a lovely *Annunciation* and four other works.

ANDREA CASTAGNO (1398–1457) If Filippo Lippi has come down to us trailing clouds of romance, Andrea Castagno may stand as the symbol of that temper of Renaissance Italy which always had its hand on its dagger. The legend grew until it included the murder of Domenico Veneziano that Andrea alone might exploit the secret of oil painting which Domenico is said to have brought to Florence; and, although this phase of it has been conclusively disproved, we still have a truculent person often involved in trouble. So far as we know,

however, life was never too kind to Andrea Castagno from the days of his childhood when Benedetti di Medici found him, a talented shepherd lad making crude pictures whilst he tended his sheep, until his death in poverty in 1457. Little wonder, then, that we have an aggressive personality, given to the worship of crude strength and mere power which was one line of Renaissance thought later to find its great exponent in Machiavelli.

Castagno's pictures reflect his temperament. There is power without grace. He searches for anatomy of physical strength, and builds up his forms of shadows as Masaccio did, but, unlike that master, retains the line. The first large commission was the decoration of the Villa Pantolfini, about 1435. It would be interesting to know whether he suggested to that haughty family, or they to him, the scheme of decorating their hall with nine figures of heroes and heroines, for the subject was entirely suited both to the painter and his patrons. The frescoes (now in S. Apollonia) show Castagno at his best. Their colour may be harsh, their feeling gaunt, but there is the dignity and power of a great realist in them. That of *Pippo Spano* (that soldier of fortune who, going to Budapest as a clerk, had managed to become Dictator and a knight of Christendom withal, doubtless highly to the approval of Castagno) is the best of the series.

Other works of note include the *Crucifixion* in the National Gallery, a picture of amazing grandeur and dramatic power in a small space, and a similar subject in the Uffizi. Faced by these pictures, we think more of the emotional German artists of the times than of gay Florence, and always there is something Northern about Castagno's work. Besides the series of heroes,

Florence boasts yet another fine work in the tomb portrait of *Tolentino*, a companion picture to Uccello's Hawkswood in the cathedral. America, in the *Portrait of a Young Man* in the Morgan Collection, has a fine specimen of Castagno's art.

DOMENICO VENEZIANO The shadow of a curious figure passes across Castagno's life as it does across Florentine art at this time —that of Domenico, called "of Venice," although we have no trace of him in Venice itself. Fellow painter with Castagno, and teacher of Baldovinetti, we hear much of him but possess little authentic work. There is evidence of him working at Perugia in 1438, but no work is extant there, and we must look largely to the portraits which we find here and there, those profile pieces with the hair plucked to give the high forehead *à la mode* in late 15th century Italy.

The story was that he brought the oil medium down from Venice, but all we know of his use of oil is as an overglaze to the usual tempera medium. This in itself, however, was important, for it permitted of overpainting, and moved Italian art into a new dimension thereby. There is a sombre glory about the works we know to be Domenico's, an effect almost of ancient mosaic, with pale tone harmonies in place of the old Gothic colouring.

The *Madonna with S. Lucy*, in the Uffizi, is the outstanding work of this little-known master. Little else is definite, but the National Gallery possesses three parts from a fresco which once adorned a street shrine in Florence, wherein, despite exposure for centuries, the two heads of saints and the Madonna reveal Domenico as a noble painter.

PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA (1416-1492) Domenico seems to have been a master or an influence upon many of the painters of his time; Castagno and Filippo Lippi were in his artistic debt, but the one master whom we think of as having worked directly under him is that rare spirit, Piero della Francesca. Again our definitions work loose when we call him Florentine. He was not born at Florence, but at Borgo San Sepolcro, and thus geographically belongs to Umbria. Moreover, it is at Arezzo, at Rome, at Urbino, Ferrara and in his native town that his work was done. Nevertheless, his ideals are so typically Florentine, and his artistic descent from Uccello and this Domenico so certain, that we claim him for Florence. He is, before all else, an intellectualist. His forerunner is studious Uccello; his great pupil, Signorelli, leading us directly to Michel Angelo. Old Luca Pacioli could say of him that he was "monarch of his times in the science of painting," and it was indeed the science of painting that Piero mastered. He wrote a quite unreadable book on the mathematical basis of perspective; and he might have been another fanatic like Uccello save that his intellectual passion was tempered with a love of nature and a power of portraying her out-of-doors effects which earned him the name of "*plein air*" Piero. One needs only to look at the *Baptism* (National Gallery) flooded with light thrown from the sky or reflected in silvery-green from the leaves; or at the cold dawn sky in the *Resurrection* at Piero's native place to be satisfied as to his claim to the title.

Of his life we know little. The actual date of his birth is obscure. We meet him working under Domenico

Veneziano, at S. Egidio, in Florence, or at Loreto; we hear of him in various parts of Italy, but almost everywhere the frescoes of which he was master have disappeared. Then, an old man of seventy, we learn from a chronicler, "the ban of blindness struck the palette from his hand and the pencil from his fingers."

His few works which remain to us convince us of the greatness of those we have lost. At an age when painting was tending to lose its grand style for *genre* detail, Piero builds in noble static masses. There is pose rather than movement, power rather than emotion, a quality of sculpture rather than that of painting. The works have a structural grandeur and a sense of composition which link them to those of Michel Angelo himself. Piero gives us the impression that he is above emotion, and that in his still world, where pale tone effects of silvery grey encompass the calm figures, emotion would be an impertinence. Even his sunlight and shadow, which none had rendered so faithfully before, has a mood of dawn and sunrise, of some strange hour when nature is most withdrawn from humankind. But in this passionless, frozen world Piero was free to create an art as noble as architecture.

Most of his work has been lost to us. The possession of two pictures in the National Gallery constitutes real treasure. These are the *Baptism*, with all the typically Piero qualities, and the *Nativity*, with a little more humanity than we usually get from him. The great place to study Piero, however, is at Arezzo, where he painted ten stories from the legend of the Holy Cross; the outstanding one being the *Vision of Constantine*, noteworthy for its fine chiaroscuro. Two other examples demand note: one is the portrait of *Montefeltro*

and his Duchess in the Uffizi, the other the truly magnificent *Resurrection* at Borgo San Sepolcro, which Aldous Huxley has called the greatest picture in the world.

ANTONIO POLLAIUOLO (1432–1498)

The history of this scientific search for truth and mastery which characterised Piero della Francesca as it characterised the whole of this second era would be incomplete without mention of the Pollaiuolo brothers. PIERO POLLAIUOLO (1443–1496) need not trouble us; but to his more masterful brother attention must be given. Antonio was one of Ghiberti's assistants with the Baptistery gates, and he was a typical mid-Renaissance craftsman and artist-thinker. He was goldsmith and engraver, sculptor and painter, but most of all he was a supreme student of anatomy, whose drawings were being passed round the studios of Florence a hundred years later. That it is which constitutes his great claim. The brothers were the first to make study of dead bodies to discover the secrets of anatomy, and Antonio exhibits that passion for the human form in violent action which was to be so often the theme of later artists and sculptors. Yet another innovation which they made was the definite abandonment of tempera for oil painting. Evidently these grandsons of the poulterer were not conservatively minded, and it was of just these enquiring spirits that the Renaissance came into being.

The National Gallery possesses Antonio's masterpiece, the *S. Sebastian*, which Vasari made famous in a long passage of praise for the experimental anatomy of the figures, although Ruskin launched his thunders against it for the same reason. The poses are so varied

as to reveal the picture as a study rather than an inspiration, but Antonio would have preferred it so. We see the same urge in the famous engraving of the *Ten Nude Fighting Men*, a copy of which is in the British Museum. This enthusiasm for ferocity grows from the passion for seeing the body as an efficient machine and wishing to demonstrate its most varied and expressive actions. One other work must be noticed before passing from Antonio. Both in the *S. Sebastian* and in the *Rape of Deianira* in the Yale University Collection at New Haven, we have fine landscapes of the Arno country. In the *Deianira* the river has movement as emphatic as Pollaiuolo's people usually effect. Thus we must credit him with being a worthy and experimental landscape painter as well as one who carrried the science of anatomy one bold degree forward.

BALDOVINETTI (1427–1499)

One other phase of this research—this time in the direction of experiments with mediums—we have with Alesso Baldovinetti. He stands as a definite link in Florentine art. Behind him is Fra Angelico, whose pupil and assistant he was; after him Ghirlandajo and Verrocchio as pupils and helpers in their turn. Baldovinetti also studied with Domenico Veneziano, and perhaps it was from him that he imbibed his passion for trying out new ideas in pigment and mediums, a practice destined to ruin much of his work. He lived on until practically the end of the century, and dropped behind in the evolution of art, but he had his influence in turning it into those lines of grace and poetry which were to flower gloriously with Botticelli.

We find this characteristic in the lovely *Madonna Adoring*, in the Louvre, with its fine background of

topographical landscape. None knew better than he how to suggest space and distance in landscape, and it is said that one of his experiments was in the direction of placing touches of pure colour in juxtaposition after the manner we call "*pointillism*."

The portrait now ascribed to him in the National Gallery was thought once to be by Piero della Francesca and once by Uccello. It is one of the earliest pure portraits in that gallery and belongs to the style of clean cut profile such as his master, Domenico, painted. The *Madonna of the Annunciation* at Florence is one of Baldovinetti's spoiled pictures. It was painted on dry plaster, and has inevitably crumbled away, leaving but a suggestion of its early loveliness.

BENOZZO GOZZOLI (1420–1498)

If such artists as Baldovinetti or the Brothers Pollaiuolo represent the time spirit of the second part of the 15th century in their earnestness, we meet the complementary phase of it in the gay reflection of the two great narrative painters of the period: Ghirlandajo and Benozzo Gozzoli. Fra Angelico's favourite pupil managed marvellously to let the claims of both mind and spirit pass him by. His world was of the senses, a place of gay flowers, of singing birds, of beautiful clothes (he was the son of a doublet maker and perhaps it was "in the blood"). Other men struggled with problems of anatomy and perspective; the fight between the old faith and the new humanism raged; our good Gozzoli made fascinating decorations, filled every inch with pleasant detail, expended much gold paint, and was so happy in it all that it mattered not a whit if he were betraying the *Zeitgeist*. He was a child of Florence, and Florence was a city of holiday mood.

Did they ask him for a Madonna in the manner of his master, the Fra; he presented it duly, but with what gaiety of spirit, what singing angels, gay robes, coloured flowers. These, and not the subject, bespeak the man. It was the Florentine festivals, pageants and processions which had his mind, the cavalcades in which the citizens indulged so gaily.

In this spirit we find Gozzoli working at the huge fresco for the chapel of the palace of the Medici, decorating the entire wall with a *Procession of the Magi*, full of contemporary details, portraits, and local scenery. When the Medici moved to the Pitti Palace this house passed into the hands of the Riccardi family and was given their name, so that it is on the walls of the Riccardi Palace at Florence where we find to-day Gozzoli's greatest work.

Ten years after he was at Pisa, called there to decorate the north wall of the Campo Santo, the building enclosing the burial ground of sacred earth brought from the Holy Land. For sixteen years Gozzoli worked there with his assistants; but no burial place could quench his ardent love of sensuous, breathing life, and the style remains throughout the twenty-four frescoes crowded with incident and overflowing with life. When he died they made his own tomb in the midst of his great work there.

The characteristics of Gozzoli are so individual that one cannot mistake his pictures. Although his birth and training make him Florentine, there is something Sienese in his interests—his passion for crowd-life, his busy filling of the space; yet, remembering how much he was influenced by Umbrian Gentile da Fabriano, perhaps one can only conclude that he stood outside place as he stood outside time in his own world of pure fancy. His mosaic

of pure colours, his lavish accessories, his obvious love of detail, everything rather in the manner of missal painting, and a panoramic method which extends through both dimensions of his pictures: these are the signs manual of his handiwork. We may realise, upon reflection, that it is all artifice and surface, that its significance is to the eye and never to the mind or spirit; but we will gladly forgive this Peter Pan of 15th century Florence and stay with him in his own realm of fancy, refusing to grow up with the more imposing spirits of the times.

His works are to be met with in many places in Italy. Besides the outstanding examples at Florence and Pisa, we have the wonderful series at the church of S. Agostino at S. Gimignano. The Pisan frescoes have suffered badly from exposure, but those in the church of the noted little hill-town of the towers are perfectly preserved. The National Gallery possesses a typical *Madonna with Angels*, and a somewhat frivolous version of the *Rape of Helen*. This latter is almost certainly the end panel of one of those *cassoni*, the bridal chests which were the fashion of the time. It is interesting to-day as being one of the oldest paintings in which a classical subject was introduced.

GHIRLANDAJO (1449–1494)

With popular Gozzoli we associate in spirit the other master who could take the town by his reflection of the holiday world. Ghirlandajo is one of two masters who stand at the culmination of this second period, accepting in their diverse ways all that this hundred years brought to painting, yet both carrying that knowledge into culs-de-sac. The other is Botticelli, dreamer and creator of dreams.

Doubtless Ghirlandajo studied the diffuse narrative methods of successful Gozzoli; and equally he was the son of that Florence which, under the rule of Lorenzo the Magnificent, loved pomp and pageantry and dwelt entirely in the world of the senses. With that world of spectacle Ghirlandajo, like Gozzoli, was well-content. His name was Domenico Bigordi; but the popular appellation of "Ghirlandajo," bestowed because his father was a maker of golden garlands, might well symbolise his art, for he gives us such decoration of life, such surface glory, expressed with exquisite taste and love of the thing in itself. Ultra-ethical Ruskin may utter diatribes against Ghirlandajo's secular mind and his debasing of religious subjects: the accusations are true, but their truth does not matter, for he never accepted any standard save that of his wealthy patrons; and accordingly he basked in the summer sun of Florence regardless of the storm-cloud of Savonarola which gathered overhead, and burst just after his death.

That an artist so completely in accord with the spirit of his times should be successful is matter for little wonder. Ghirlandajo's bottega must have been from the beginning a busy place. Two younger brothers were there to help, and we read of the master sighing for a commission to paint the seven-mile walls of Florence: an anecdote as significant as it is amusing, for his type of success invariably betokens the vigorous and enthusiastic worker. Ghirlandajo need not have complained; orders flowed in, and he gave his noble patrons what they wanted: a respectable amount of religion, a great deal of contemporary local life, costumes and customs, and excellent portraits of everybody concerned.

The story of success begins when he was only twenty with a commission to paint some frescoes for the

Ognisanti, and whatever we may think of the *Madonna of Pity* which we find there, the portraits of the Vespucci family with which he surrounded Her are superb. He had found his method, and henceforth he stood for it. His next work at S. Gimignano shows him influenced by the less sophisticated Gozzoli; but soon he is back at the Ognisanti, painting a very comfortable *Jerome*, and, for the refectory, a *Last Supper* which has all the air of a pleasant Florentine feast.

In 1481 came his great chance when Pope Sixtus called the artists to decorate the Sistine, and Ghirlandajo was among them. His picture of the *Calling of Peter and Andrew* hints that he was on his mettle, for it is one of the finest things he did, restrained in design (for him) and with a landscape of such breadth that we think of Claude. In 1485 he was employed by Sassetti, the treasurer to Lorenzo and the gentleman with the purse-strings of Florence thereby, to do a chapel for the Trinita with *Stories of S. Francis*. As we may expect, there is little of the simplicity that Giotto put into the work at Santa Croce, but in place of it a marvellous record of contemporary Florence. The *Honorius Creating the Franciscan Order* is a masterly work; one suspects that if Ghirlandajo had any passion it was for Florence, and in this picture, which he staged in the Piazza della Signoria, he made a pæan of praise to his city. The altar-piece for the chapel was a fine *Adoration of the Shepherds*, which we find in the Uffizi, a characteristically graceful and pretty thing with fine portraiture. Yet a better picture of the same type was the *Adoration of the Magi* which he did for the Foundling Hospital, the Innocenti, and which is still there.

Another great commission was to fall to the lot of the fortunate painter. In 1485 he contracted with the

Tornabuoni family to decorate the choir of S. Maria Novella, the most aristocratic church in Florence at that time, and the frescoes he has left us on its walls are examples of all that was magnificent in Ghirlandajo's work, although they exhibit also his outstanding faults. The subject was to be stories from the life of the Virgin and S. John; Ghirlandajo as usual made them the bases of scores of excellent portraits. The *Birth of John*, for example, is made incidental to a magnificent full-length portrait of his patron's daughter.

Because of the excellence of his work in this way, we find ourselves always turning to Ghirlandajo as portraitist. He made some lovely studies of the beautiful Giovanna degli Albizzi, who married a son of the Tornabuoni, and was a queen of beauty in her brief day. She is the woman in yellow in the *Visitation* at S. Maria Novella, but fine separate portraits of her exist in the Morgan Collection and in the National Gallery. There is, too, that famous *Old Man and Boy*, in the Louvre, wherein even deformity has been robbed of its unpleasantness by the gracious art of this master. The Louvre also contains a good *Visitation;* but Ghirlandajo was, before all else, a worker in fresco, declining to spoil the brightness of his colour by oil painting, and we must look for his work in the places where he painted it—at Florence, Rome and S. Gimignano.

FILIPPINO LIPPI (1457–1504)

The true stature of Botticelli, with whom this second period may fitly be closed, can be judged the better if we glance first at the work of his pupil. Filippino Lippi, the son of Filippo and the nun Lucrezia, was born at Prato, and although he was only a lad of twelve when his father died, there is every

evidence in his work that he learned much from Lippo. But Filippino had a receptive mind, and when, after his father's death, he was taken to Florence and put into the bottega of Botticelli, he so successfully took the colour of his new master that it has been difficult ever since to distinguish between them in certain works. Always his art evidences this early duality of the training from his father and Botticelli.

Vasari seems to have shared a universal admiration for the man and his work. His kindness, his courtesy, made him the beloved of Florence, and when he died all the shops were closed for his funeral. In art his star has waxed and waned according to the fashions of thought. He began with the simple emulation of great models, was fortunate in being given the work of finishing the frescoes which Masaccio had commenced in the Brancacci Chapel. Under the shadow of the masterpieces of that great man young Filippino worked in chastened mood, and his paintings there are noble and restrained. So, too, the altar-piece in S. Spirito in Florence; and the *Vision of S. Bernard*, in the Badia, which remains the high-water mark of Filippino's art and his indisputable masterpiece. Then the decadence set in, the passion of this antiquarian age to concentrate on classic ornament and dress, to elaborate architecture, to crowd the work with irrelevances.

The Strozzi family commissioned him to decorate a chapel at S. Maria Novella, and he stepped well over the line between legitimate interest and details for their own sake. The gestures and movements are exaggerated, the crowds of figures obscure the intention and bury the story, the religious feeling is lost behind overloaded narrative. He belongs in spirit to the age which was to follow, the age of the fulfilment, when

nothing more was to be learned. Indeed, in his work with its restlessness and over-elaborate ornament, we have the beginnings of the tendency which culminated in Baroque art.

Vasari, child of that same age, praised him for these very qualities. The fact that not only his human persons but his angels were dressed with archæological exactness in classical costumes was deemed a cause for approval at the end of the 15th century, and remained so until critics like Ruskin swung the pendulum over in a demand for spiritual feeling rather than worldly accessories. It is interesting that Perugino, of the more spiritual Umbrian school, finished Filippino's *Deposition*, now in the Uffizi, in the starkly symbolistic manner of that school, and so provided a striking contrast between the two methods.

This advance from clarity to complexity in design is echoed by Filippino's advance in colour. We have seen that his father had broken up the simple tones and colours of earlier masters and so imparted a new richness to art. Filippino continued this process until we have an effect which we connect rather with the great Venetian colourists than with the Florentines. By a stroke of genius he managed to ally this with a luminosity and an occasional pallor of colouring which yields the finest effects from his brush.

As the Renaissance advances we tend to have more extant works from the great artists, and Filippino has left us some lovely things. The Brancacci Chapel frescoes, particularly the *Crucifixion of S. Peter*, the masterly *S. Jerome* of the Badia, and the altar-piece of S. Spirito should be seen for his work. The Uffizi has some fine specimens, including a typical *Adoration of the Magi*, where the drapery is exceptionally good, and a *Madonna*

Crowned by Angels. One of Filippino's best works is the *Virgin with Child and Saints* in the Warren Collection in Boston, whilst the National Gallery has a lovely *Madonna with S. Jerome and Dominic*, with its fine broad masses of dark colour against golden tones presaging the full ripeness of the next century.

So we may part from this 15th century of ceaseless research, experiment and progress, held back for a space to glance at one figure who seems to us to-day to have been born out of due time. There are some artists who must await the passage of centuries before their thought strikes contact with their fellows. Such was Blake, and such was Filippino's master, Botticelli.

BOTTICELLI (1456–1510)

If we open a book on the Italian masters written fifty years ago we find Botticelli's work dismissed in a few lines. Pater, who understood him so well, writes of him in 1883 as of a minor painter. To-day Botticelli is probably the most popular of the Italian masters. The reason? A growing understanding of the more subjective ideas in art; an escape from the materialisation of thought which concentrated attention upon the artists of the "grand manner" and those who led directly to it; a certain effeminacy of culture and subtlety of mentality which harmonises well with the products of the hesitant spirit of 15th century Florence. Thus placed in accord by the very soul of our own tentative epoch, we can appreciate the exquisite draughtsmanship, the rhythmic line, the whole poetry of swaying figures and dreaming faces, which proved an enigma to earlier centuries. And Botticelli comes into his own after more than four hundred years.

Of his life we know but little, and of that which we know the mental quality is more intriguing than its action. It is said that the young Alessandro Filipepi "refused to read, write or sum," but this may have been a schoolmaster's misapprehension of a dreamy boy, for later we find him a keen student of Dante, and a figure among that group of Platonists who gathered round Lorenzo; whilst his *Spring* reflects lines from Poliziano, the greatest poet and scholar of the Medici court, and the pictures of his later years reveal a mystic preoccupied with strange learning. It is this mysticism which is the key to his art.

At fourteen he was apprenticed to Filippo Lippi, and for seven or more years, as his pictures testify, he worked under him. The other formative influence was that of Antonio Pollaiuolo, whose work in the Mercanzia Botticelli was called to finish. In 1472 he is entered in the Company of S. Luke, an acknowledged painter in his own right, and ten years afterwards—so great are the strides he has made under the patronage of the Medici—the greatest work of the time, the decoration of the walls of the Sistine Chapel, are put into his charge by Pope Sixtus. Thus, under these most powerful patrons, was open to Botticelli such success as Ghirlandajo and Benozzo Gozzoli were achieving with their straightforward narratives; but something in the nature of the man forbade. That poetry, that unearthliness which infuse the work betoken the individualist. He turned more and more within himself, returned from Rome and devoted himself to the illustration of Dante in a conventionalised style entirely out of accord with the naturalism of his day. Botticelli, in fact, was an artist pleasing himself and the vision within him—a new phenomenon in the world of art.

Then came to that mind, already immersed in mysticism, the call of Savonarola. During the six years of that fanatical mission, from 1492 to 1498, we can imagine Botticelli driving deeper into his own strange mind, turning its Platonism to Christian mysticism, its passionate search for Hellenistic loveliness to one for heavenly beauty. With Savonarola's martyrdom he believed that the world had entered into the second woe of the Apocalypse, and, as his *Mystic Nativity* in the National Gallery asserts, he waited the Second Coming. The work was painted in 1500, the artist died in 1510; but that last decade is one of silence. The unfulfilled prophecies which had taken hold of his mind probably sapped the impulse to paint, and Botticelli lived on the charity of the Medici, whose cause also was in eclipse during those troubled years.

The individuality of Botticelli's work lifts it apart from that of any other painter. That he might have been a narrative artist making religious story the excuse for the portraits of his patrons after the fashion which his master, Filippo Lippi, had set, the *Adoration of the Magi* in the National Gallery proves. Its portraits of the Medici princes (and of Botticelli himself as the man on the extreme right) are among the best things of this kind. His individual portraits—the full-lipped, brooding faces of Florentine youths—mark him as a great portrait draughtsman. His *Mars and Venus* show him master of decorative allegorical painting dear to the humanistic circle gathered about Lorenzo. But it is in the mystical paintings, in the thoughtfully sad Madonnas surrounded by strange angel faces, and in the *Spring* and the *Venus* conceived in a like vein of poetic melancholy that we have the true Botticelli. In this mood he can take the human form that he knew so well how to draw, and for the sake

of his flowing composition line bring it near to distortion. To-day we can understand an artist doing that; but at the end of the 15th century it meant swimming against a powerful current.

Distinctive as this exquisite draughtsmanship and rhythmic manner was, it is equally the matter of Botticelli which bespeaks him, for we recognise at once the visionary and poetic import of those lovely circular compositions with the grouped pensive angels crowding in. It is this lyrical, poetic content which appeals so strongly to our own time, allied as it is to a subtlety of drawing and design which we find entirely satisfying, for all that it turned aside from the grand manner and made its home in some inner country of the mind rather than among the noblest physical types of this world.

The National Gallery contains some of the finest of Botticelli's own work besides a number of good things from his school. The *Mystic Nativity*, the *Mars and Venus*, the *Adoration* and two *Portraits* demand special attention. The Louvre has at least one beautiful *Madonna* and a noteworthy fresco of *Giovanna Albizzi and the Three Graces*. On the walls of the Sistine we find the three vast compositions which were his contribution, but one has the feeling that he was not happy there, and there is little in them to confess the master. It is in the Uffizi that we find his greatest works: the *Spring*, the *Birth of Venus*, the *Calumny* (a bold allegorical picture in his later manner), and some of the loveliest of his mythological and religious pictures.

With Botticelli, the artist-dreamer, we leave this 15th century with which he had so little in common. With the next period of the culmination of the Renaissance he would have had even less, for he was as we have seen a reaction from, rather than a contributor to, the

central thought and practice of his century. That century had striven to place in the hands of the artists the whole means of expression, and it had demanded that these means should be used to reflect its own masterful glory. Savonarola in religion and, to some extent, Botticelli in art, had thrown their weight against that demand, but with their failure the 16th century pressed its dues, and no man gainsaid it.

III

From Signorelli to Michel Angelo

With the masters of the 16th century we come to a period of fruition for which all that had gone before seems preparation. In the perfection of his achievement and in the idealisation of his types and of his thought Botticelli belonged to this new century; but there is, as we have seen, a kind of turning aside and renunciation of the implications of humanism which makes him spiritually alien from it. But Raphael, Leonardo and Michel Angelo belonged to it and to Florence, though Raphael came from Umbria and passed on to Rome, though Leonardo left Florence for Milan, and Michel Angelo, as a painter, is the decorator of the Vatican. It was the golden age of Italian Art. Not only in Florence, but in Venice and in the cities of the North, promise and experiment gave place to fulfilment so abundant that nothing more remained, and decline became inevitable. In Florence the artists came to their maturity under the ægis of Lorenzo the Magnificent, toward the end of the previous century, in that court where humanism reached its noblest intellectual expression. That, too, was in its way a climacteric: Florence was torn afresh by enemies within and without, the Medici went into exile, the puritanism of Savonarola halted the intellectual force of humanism for some years, and when that wave went down in reaction the foreign invasions which ravaged all Italy moved for ever the

centre of power from the Tuscan city. A succession of unscrupulous and powerful Popes gave Rome a period of domination, and reacted upon art by the recruiting of the greatest masters of their day to decorate the Vatican palace. But whether it materialised at Florence, at Rome, at Milan or in the distant court of France, this grand style of the early 16th century was the ripe fruit of Florentine thought and experiment. Like the great art of Greece, this grand style was an apotheosis of the human form, as the expression of the human mind and spirit. Mastery over anatomy learned largely from the sculptors; mastery over draughtsmanship, and over the science of geometry applied to composition; mastery over the painter's mediums: these were the technical elements—the manner of the grand style. Its matter was the expression of the ultimate logic of the cult of humanism which made mankind the *raison d'être* of the universe whatever lip-service was paid to forces outside humanity. Thus mankind was idealised, given perfect bodies to convey the greatest motives, depicted at the height of its manifold activities. The result, as in Greek art, was generalisation: individuality was sublimated into ideal types. Both the action of the drama and the actors in that drama were shown only at moments of sublimity: the humility of the old mystic art, the earthly commonplaces of narrative art, the tentativeness of experimental art fell away. Painting, which had taken two hundred and fifty years to come to earth from the golden Byzantine heavens, left the earth again in an ideal perfection of the human form, with the kingdom, the power and the glory of the world as its attributes.

LUCA SIGNORELLI (1441–1523) For all that his birth took place in the first half of the 15th century, Luca Signorelli belongs to this new century of achievement. In like manner, although his birth at Cortona and his training under Piero della Francesca place him outside the Florentine school in one sense, his preoccupation with problems of anatomy and the whole quality of his method and intellect put him into it. His true master was Antonio Pollaiuolo; his true disciple no less than Michel Angelo. Thus he stands between the periods, between the schools, an important link in the transition from the experimental to the grand manner, and withal a fine artist in his own right.

He is a Florentine in his concern with the human body expressing realistic movement, a man of the 16th century in his paganising even of religious subjects. It is noteworthy that his composition for the *Pan*, now in Berlin, is identically that for certain of his Christian pictures; or again that his background for the *Nativity* in the National Gallery is filled with pagan figures. To Signorelli the two currents of thought were inextricably mixed. He was the perfect humanist. Vasari, whose relation he was, has given a detailed portrait of him as a man of the world, dressing well, living well, and generally enjoying to the full the rich intellectual and social life of his time.

His work we recognise by unerring characteristics. Its colour is often rather unspirited, tending as it does to dull browns and greens; its design is magnificent; its realism carries it farther than that of any artist before him. His enthusiasm for anatomy opened that avenue to a world of Titans which Michel Angelo followed to

its splendid end. Even in the subject of the *Madonna and Child* at the Uffizi, the space is filled in with heroic nudes excellently posed, and in his design for the *Death of Moses* in the Sistine it is the nude youth in the centre of the composition who takes the eye.

This display of his power sometimes spoiled his picture, but when he was asked to finish the frescoes at Orvieto Cathedral left by Fra Angelico, it served to create a masterpiece. In the *Last Judgment* and the *Resurrection* there he exerted his utmost powers of invention, of psychological and anatomical realism, crowding his wall with magnificent figures in every posture, and creating a piece of realism based upon the picturing of the logical possibilities of the situation. Pollaiuolo, in the *Ten Nudes*, had pointed the way; Leonardo and Michel Angelo in the great competitive battle cartoons which were to stir the soul of Florence to a realisation of their stature were to follow it; and the heroic age of Italian painting was thus initiated.

These paintings at Orvieto must be studied, therefore, to get the true measure of Signorelli. Apart from them, however, we can find good works in many collections. The *Pan*, at Berlin, is exceptionally fine; the *Birth of S. John*, in the Louvre; whilst the National Gallery has two or three good works, and in particular the *Circumcision*, which is said to contain a self-portrait in one of the figures.

VERROCCHIO (1435–1488) One other figure, belonging in date to the old century, is most usefully considered as a link with this new one. Verrocchio is primarily a sculptor, the creator of the Colleoni statue; as a painter he concerns us only with his one authentic work, the fine *Baptism* of the Uffizi.

In the history of painting, however, he is the maker of artists, for his bottega was the most live centre of art study and theory in the Florence of his day. He had carried forward from Donatello the passion for true science; he passed it on to his many pupils, to Leonardo, to Perugino, to Lorenzo di Credi. Two of these were founders of distant schools: Perugino making a glory of the hitherto scattered ideas of the painters in Umbria, and Leonardo giving thirty years of his life to work in Milan.

LORENZO DI CREDI (1459–1537) Lorenzo Scaprelloni, was really a poor third in this trinity, unless we take moral painstakingness as our criterion. Verrocchio himself must have believed in him on all scores, for he made him his trustee during absence in Venice, and in his will confirmed this arrangement, and nominated him to finish the Colleoni statue. Lorenzo's care in his work, his grinding of his own colours, his terror of movement lest dust should settle on his pictures, as well as his virtues as a Christian and a gentleman, have become legends. He was one of those who were moved by Savonarola to burn all but definitely religious pictures on the "bonfire of vanities," but we imagine there was little from him, for the cast of his mind made him an Umbrian rather than a Florentine in feeling. For us to-day his work has little appeal. Smoothness of talent and care of finish are not enough. At first we are attracted by the neat, parklike landscapes which he permits beyond the windows, but at second glance their tidiness repels us. Nor can his characterless Madonnas and chubby children win us, whilst the colour over which he took so much care has suffered as much as that of more eager artists. The charm of his pictures

comes from qualities we admire in the Umbrians, his pervading spirit of quietude and piety; and the famous *Annunciation* of the Uffizi, as well as the really better *Adoration of the Shepherds* there, owe their virtue to these qualities. The Metropolitan Museum, New York, has two typical works, a *Madonna Adoring* and a *Virgin and Child;* and both the Louvre and National Gallery have two.

Two other masters of this date we must also look at with the eye of the pietists, linking them with each other because of their amazing friendship.

FRA BARTOLOMMEO (1475–1517)

ALBERTINELLI (1474–1515)

Never surely was stranger friendship than this between the two pupils of Cosimo Rosselli. Bartolommeo was deeply religious all his life: a frequenter of S. Marco, and a devotee of Savonarola; a sacrificer of his works to the bonfire; and one who, in 1500, became a monk, and forswore painting until Raphael persuaded him to recommence for the glory of God and the profit of his monastery. Albertinelli, on the contrary, was a lover of this world, a political partisan, hater of monks, and when in pique at some criticism, he renounced painting, it was to turn publican and open a wine shop. But his love for the Frate made him think of turning monk to be with him, and by some strange arrangement which must have caused much heart-burning in the breasts of priors and such authorities, the Fra and Albertinelli entered into an artistic partnership in their painting, half the money from their joint efforts going to the inn-keeper painter, half to the treasury of Bartolommeo's monastery.

Their style—for despite this diversity of approach there is a remarkable similarity—conveyed exalted religious sentiment by simple monumental grandeur. The compositions are usually massive: a few figures in a setting of architectural simplicity, finely conceived draperies, and rich colouring. Self-distrust on the part of Bartolommeo, and the belief that his painting did not matter in the light of religion, probably prevented a natural genius from giving whole-hearted study, so that there is a lack of firmness in much of the draughtsmanship and in the anatomy. His conception of Christ is effeminate and weak. Nevertheless, the dignity, the fine colour, the excellent composition of these paintings show the partners as being in the true line of Florentine art. It is recorded that Fra Bartolommeo invented the lay figure to help his study of draperies; and Raphael himself learned much of his colouring from the Frate.

The Uffizi has a fine *Pieta* by the monk, and Albertinelli's famous *Visitation*, whilst the Pitti Palace has the *Salvator Mundi* and *S. Mark*. The Vatican also possesses some of Fra Bartolommeo's best work. One of the treasures of the Boston Museum is a *Holy Family with S. Anne*. The Louvre has several works by these masters, but the National Gallery has only recently acquired anything, and still not of the best.

MICHEL ANGELO (1475–1564)

Meantime, the art of Michel Angelo came into being. He did not hold himself to be a painter any more than he wished to be an architect. "I call God to witness that it is against my wish," he wrote to the Pope when he was asked to take over the building of S. Peter's, and he protested with equal fervour when the commission to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel

was thrust upon him. He conceived himself as a sculptor, and regarded these activities as interruptions of his true work. Thus (if we except two or three early pictures, and the lost *Battle* cartoon) twice only, and then under compulsion, did Michel Angelo become a painter. Nevertheless, he stands at the forefront of this art, and his achievement upon the vaulted ceiling of the Sistine is beyond compare the greatest painting in the world.

By what is almost a paradox this sublimity of conception and execution, this raising of the physical expressiveness of the human body to its apotheosis, were the work of a man whose own body was surprisingly neurotic. He dominated its weakness by sheer willpower, forcing himself to perform marvellous feats of physical endurance in the pursuit of his work, as he forced himself to continue the study of anatomy from dead bodies though at first the proceeding made him physically ill. Leonardo and Raphael were both notorious for personal beauty, and as connoisseurs of princely living; Michel Angelo, who lives again for us in Rodin's *Homme au Nez Cassé* and in the self-portrait in the Uffizi, had neither beauty of body nor of estate. In his devotion to his work he sacrificed everything, not troubling to dress well, to live well; existing on the simplest food in the simplest manner. In such a body, neglected and often racked with pain, was housed the soul which could create the David from its marble, or the Genii of the Lorenzo Tombs, which could breathe life into the Adam of the Sistine ceiling, or set the prophets and sibyls in its vaulting. A paradox, indeed, yet one which was to give more than material significance to his mastery, to place him as artist alongside the Shakespeare of *Lear* and *Hamlet*, when else he might have stopped at the triumphant surface of his art.

Michelagnolo Buonarroti was born at Caprese in 1475, and even as a boy, despite the opposition of his father, went straightforward in the pursuit of art. At thirteen, the family opposition having been finally broken down, he was articled to Ghirlandajo, who at that time was the most successful popular painter in Florence. Ghirlandajo's facile work must have been a shock to the new apprentice; he probably found himself more at home studying the frescoes of Masaccio at the Brancacci Chapel, which, since the beginning of the century, had been the model for great art, and it was there that his fellow apprentice, Torriggiano, "stung to the quick by some sarcasm," gave him the blow which broke the bones of his nose. Our next glimpse of Michel Angelo is again in the presence of masterpieces—this time in the garden of the Medici, studying the antique marbles gathered there. Lorenzo, with an eye for genius, took the earnest boy into his own household, and from that moment opportunities for great works never ceased. At twenty-three he had already carved the *Pietà*, and before he was thirty he had established his fame with the colossal *David*. About this time he painted the one finished easel picture which we possess, the *Holy Family* of the Uffizi. It has a sculptor's strength and Michel Angelo's characteristic gravity. His passion for the nude caused him to emulate Signorelli in filling his background with heroic figures. The exquisitely modelled forms and draperies, the studied pyramidal composition, betoken a master.

Two other unfinished paintings are in the National Gallery. Both are almost certainly early works: the *Madonna with S. John* is said to have been painted when he was twenty, the *Entombment* a little later. They are conceived in the same heroic mood as the *Holy Family*, having much of the poise and volume of sculpture which

was his true passion. After these early pictures he probably renounced such painting, for he has left his dicta that sculpture was an occupation fit for a man, and so, to a lesser degree, was fresco painting; but that oil painting was only fit for women and children.

In 1505 he was commissioned to execute a companion cartoon to the *Battle of the Standard* which Leonardo was working upon for the Council Hall at Florence. Seeking an excuse to show his prowess with the nude, Michel Angelo chose an incident from the Battle of Pisa when the soldiery were surprised whilst bathing. The original cartoon has disappeared; we have only the sketches for different groups; but when the two cartoons were hung the whole artistic life of Florence centred in the discussion of their rival merits.

Already Pope Julius had commissioned the artist to make his tomb, and in 1507 he commanded him to come to Rome to decorate the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, of which, twenty-five years before, Botticelli and his fellows had decorated the walls. Michel Angelo protested that he was a sculptor, and nominated Raphael for the work, but the Pope was inexorable. At first the artist tried to supervise a work given over to assistants; then, dissatisfied with their efforts, he undertook the whole painting single-handed, and for four years he laboured there. When it was finished he was almost crippled, and the strain on his eyes made it impossible for him to read save lying down; but the ceiling was the greatest painting in the world. He had turned its flattened vault into a skilful arrangement of spaces amid painted architecture, against which he had depicted the prophets and sibyls of Hebrew and Greek story presiding over the destiny of mankind. In the panels he had put the stories symbolising that destiny of creation, sin and

redemption. The earliest panels—*the Story of Noah*—were small in scale; then, realising the difficulty presented by that high ceiling, he conceived a plan for much larger presentation, and created a titanic grandeur, of glorious draped figures and even more glorious nudes in every heroic pose—hundreds of figures among the painted pilasters and architraves, yet united by his colour scheme into a single work of surpassing beauty.

All that Michel Angelo did in sculpture and in painting expresses his sense of a destiny almost too tragic to be endured. The *Slaves* who struggle to break their chains or to emerge from the marble; the Figures of the Medici tombs—*Night* that would not be awakened, *Dawn* that shudders into consciousness, tragic *Day* and resigned *Evening*—the brooding *Medici*, the early *Pietà*, that painting of *Mary with Jesus and John*, where the Mother holds back the book of knowledge, the early relief of the *Madonna of the Steps*, where her protecting arm is around the suckling Child: everywhere the implication is the same. In the ceiling of the Sistine he has echoed this tragic philosophy of predestination. Once he had written to Vasari: "It is ill-timed to make feasts and rejoicings for one just born," and that was his pessimistic creed. It grew, maybe, from his own eternal struggle between the striving soul and the binding flesh; but it grew into understanding of the mysteries of the incarnation of man's infinite soul in the finite body, of his fall and redemption. In the ceiling of the Sistine he has echoed this tragic philosophy of predestination. It looks out from the eyes of Adam receiving the ill-starred gift of soul and body, from every one of those youths who brood beside the prophets or the all-wise sibyls. It is, as the sonnets were to prove, the keynote of Michel Angelo's art.

Whilst one recognises the sublimity of his performance on the Sistine ceiling, it must needs be said that the idea of decorating that ceiling was far from an artistic one. Its height makes it difficult almost to impossibility to see; it is not a synthetic whole with the wall paintings; and a marble screen across the chapel intrudes into any attempt to see the decoration as a whole. These conditions were not of Michel Angelo's making. He had had no choice when the Pontiff commanded. Later, when he was working for Julius he dismissed his staff as a protest against shortness of funds and returned to Florence, and the irascible Pope demanded his return or threatened excommunication and war on the city. Julius was not to be gainsaid; however impossible the scheme his command was law. One may find, however, that the difficulty of seeing the original work makes it disappointing; but happily Michel Angelo, depending, because he was a sculptor, upon pure form, loses less than most artists in reproduction, even in reproduction in monochrome.

It was in 1512 that the Sistine ceiling was unveiled. Michel Angelo was thirty-seven and more than fifty years of active life were yet to be vouchsafed to him. His patrons in Florence and Rome struggled for his services. The great Lorenzo tombs and chapel at Florence, the Pope's tomb at Rome claimed him. Protesting, he was made architect of S. Peter's, and when he had accepted the commission he worked at it with all his customary ferocious vigour.

In 1523 he was again called to the Sistine, this time to decorate the altar wall, and for seven years he worked there upon his *Last Judgment*. The colossal painting has more of terror and less of pity, but it has a power of depicting which remains unequalled: the hundreds of figures in every conceivable posture showed his supreme

command. Christ stands in the midst—a Divine Vengeance, a God without love. Michel Angelo is an embittered man. That life of unsocial art has turned him back upon himself. Even artistically, for all its power, the *Last Judgment* lacks the beauty of colour and clarity of design of the ceiling.

In the thirty-four years which followed he only once turned from his work as sculptor and architect, but the paintings in the Paul Chapel are so ruined that they are wisely never shown. One beautiful gleam crossed his lonely life in the noble friendship with Vittoria Colonna, but this fine woman died in 1547, and the rest was increased loneliness of spirit for one who had ever been lonely.

Michel Angelo himself died in 1564. He had seen the over-running of Italy by foreign soldiery, the decadence of her art and the degradation of her life. From that wreck of the Renaissance his own exquisite works stand to us to-day: infinitely more noble than the men who commanded them; betokening, we may hope, such triumph of spirit over body as he alternately hoped and despaired of in his own philosophy.

So the great days of Florentine painting draw near their end. As often happens in art, the master-mind comes as the culmination of forces long maturing, achieves everything, and by its very achievement seems to set a period to effort. After Michel Angelo's death there is little to record in Florence. It is almost true to say that there was little to record in all Italy, though Tintoretto and Paolo Veronese were flaming out the glories of the Venetian School. Before we leave this 16th century Florence, however, one line of masters and pupils carrying forward from the last century to the very end needs

to be explored. It starts with that pedestrian mind of the 15th century COSIMO ROSSELLI (1439–1507). He had been one of the workers on the walls of the Sistine and executed, with the help of his pupil Piero, four of the cartoons there. We meet him also in the National Gallery with a *Combat between Amor and Chastity*, chiefly interesting for a massed effect of trees in its park-like landscape. However poor he was as an artist, he was, nevertheless, fortunate in his pupils, for Bartolommeo and Albertinelli were among them, and this same Piero.

PIERO DE COSIMO (1462–1537) Not only is he credited with everything of value in his master's frescoes in the Sistine, but his own strange mind, entranced by the bizarre and wandering among the by-ways of ancient mythology, took delight in creating monsters and beasts. So he stands: fantastic, romantic. He created a macabre pageant for Florence, an affair of skeletons crawling from coffins, of death's-heads and dirges, which alarmed as much as it diverted. He earned a reputation as a recluse; and, if report be true, lived on eggs which he boiled in large weekly batches in his glue-pots. An original creature this Cosimo, and we study his pictures for the evidences of that erratic mind. Nevertheless, he could create beauty as well as monstrosity, and there are few more wistfully lovely pictures in the world than his *Death of Procris* at the National Gallery, or few stranger ones than the hunting panels from a cassone in the Metropolitan Museum. From him we turn to his pupil, the man they called in his day "the faultless painter," and we may wonder what contact there was between the minds of master and pupil.

ANDREA DEL SARTO (1487–1531) Andrea d'Agnolo, the tailor's Andrew as they called him in reference to his father's trade, has come down to us as a legend. Vasari's report of the painter's tortured wedded life as the husband of the beautiful Lucrezia was probably an exaggerated account, and Browning's poem has invested the story with romantic glamour. Truth or an old wives' fable, its concern for us to-day is only with the artistic reflex of the painter's life. Andrea, under the urge of that harassed domesticity, became a prolific artist, and as an easel painter working for the dealers took the economics of art into another dimension. True he received and executed many commissions, chief among which was that for the frescoes for the Church of the Annunciation in Florence; but much of his work was a kind of inspired pot-boiling for which he received little, and the art dealers much. He painted frankly for money; it did not spoil his own art because his prowess was untouched by motive, but it took art another long stride along that road which it had already travelled so far since the 13th century masters first turned their eyes definitely to earth.

Everybody bore testimony to Andrea's skill. Michel Angelo is said to have taunted Raphael with the threat of his rivalry, and all men spoke of him as "*senza errori*." In 1518 Francis I. the king of France, and the greatest foreign patron of the Italian painters of the day, invited him to his court; and for a year, "that long festal year at Fontainebleau," he broke the chain of Lucrezia's love. Then she pleaded, and he turned his back on the golden opportunity, nor, in spite of his oath to Francis, did he return to France. The story is made

ugly by the fact that the money Francis entrusted to him to buy pictures he used for his own affairs and in building for himself a fine house. It is not surprising that Francis's patronage turned to hatred of this man he had trusted.

For all this weakness of moral fibre, Andrea invests his pictures with a dignity and grace, and has a sense of colour and of draughtsmanship which were above reproach. He could paint in fresco as richly as other men did in oils. His deep warm shadows are full of reflected light. If in the richness of the colour in his paintings we sometimes overlook his exquisite draughtsmanship, we realise its quality in the sketches in red chalk which he was fond of making. Yet there is something lacking in Andrea del Sarto's work, and that lack leaves an almost dead level of entire efficiency where we should have had the starry peaks of genius. Browning's poem is sound art criticism as well as fine dramatic narrative.

Almost every gallery has good representative pictures from the prolific brush of Andrea del Sarto. For frescoes we see him at his best on the walls of the Church of the Annunciation, where particularly we notice the graceful *Madonna of the Sack*, as his *Flight into Egypt* has come to be universally called. In the Uffizi the great *Madonna of the Harpies* is probably his best-known picture; but it is at the Pitti Palace we find him best represented. There, beside the large altar-pieces, we have his charming boy *John the Baptist*, sentimental and without a glimmer of sanctity if you will, but eternally appealing in its humanity. The Berlin Museum has one of his best works in the *Enthroned Madonna*, and the National Gallery has a number of fine things, including that *Portrait of a Sculptor* which reveals his power as portraitist.

So with the finishing of the *Last Judgment* by Michel Angelo, and the somewhat empty perfection of Del Sarto's work Florentine painting draws to its close. FRANCIABIGIO (1483–1524), Andrea's friend and fellow-worker at the Annunciato, where his *Marriage of the Virgin* is noteworthy, echoes Del Sarto's manner but falls short of his achievement. PONTORMO (1493–1558), his pupil, who commenced so brilliantly that both Raphael and Michel Angelo prophesied great things of him, drank too deeply of the Pierian spring of other men's art, and in constantly adapting his style to new methods lost original power. Sometimes his experimentalism gives his work the queer modernity of an Expressionist painter, and a real spirituality in the man invariably conveys itself to the picture when the subject is a religious one. Alongside this he was a portrait painter of no mean order, and made some excellent studies.

Portraiture again marks the work of his pupil BRONZINO (1502–1572), as the works in the National Gallery and the fine portrait of *Cosimo de Medici* in the Metropolitan Museum bear witness. Outside this sphere, however, Bronzino is negligible, unless it be as a study in the wayward psychology of the artistic temperament, for he was as amoral as his master had been worthy.

The rest, so far as Florence is concerned, is silence. For more than three hundred years the artists had wrestled with the problems of matter and manner which brought art from a conventionalised department of mediæval Christian worship to the freest expression of all phases of human activity. Subject, technique, intention, patronage; everything had changed. Through a long accumulation of qualities it had climbed to the great manner of the masters, to Michel Angelo,

Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael. All three were too vast truly to be considered as belonging to one city, and Florence could only claim her share in their making as she could only assimilate part of the wonderful output of their genius. But, apart even from these great names, her story in art is incomparable in the history of human culture, and her galleries and museums are still the world's treasure-house of art.

THE UMBRIAN SCHOOL AND RAPHAEL

In this matter of Italian Art, definitions seldom define anything more than a tendency or cover a generalisation. It has become customary to talk of the Umbrian School, but what indeed do we mean? Geographically, Umbria covers a tiny tract of land in Central Italy, and, although it includes the city of Perugia, where we may look for typical work of the Umbrians, it includes likewise Assisi, the clearing-house of æsthetic ideas in the 13th century, but depending upon Florentine, Sienese and Roman masters for its glory. Nevertheless, if we consent to treat the definition loosely, there is a spirit bred and nurtured in this district of the upper Tiber Valley and along the foothills of the Apennines which culminates in the religious painting and symbolistic mystical manner of Perugino and Raphael. It accepts something from the scientific naturalists of Florence, but not enough to disturb its own meditative mood; it can be charmed by Sienese narrative and borrow the manner; it delights, too, in the Gothic altar-pieces which Siena knew so well how to produce. All this is to say that it is a school of provincial art, reflecting belatedly the movements of the cities, being more naïve in subject and approach, more religiously-minded, less hectic in its portrayal of life. Moreover, it loves landscapes and open spaces, re-creates continually the beautiful river valley and distant blue mountains.

Such results we might expect from the conditions, especially if we remember the advent of Umbria's greatest son, S. Francis, in the 13th century, and the subsequent building and decorating of the basilica of Assisi. Here at the beginning was a great impulse towards simple religious fervour and its artistic expression. Consider the probable effects upon the slower country minds, and Umbrian art becomes its inevitable self. We should expect it to be tinged rather with Sienese mysticism than Florentine humanism; we should anticipate its more naïve personages as saints and Madonnas; and we should predict that its development would be towards an out-of-doors painting full of air and light. These, in truth, are the outstanding characteristics of the Umbrian School; and although its artists (after the manner of ambitious provincials) often went to the towns so that the manner is modified, the characteristics are seldom entirely lost, and the idea of the Umbrian School remains a working definition.

GENTILE DA FABRIANO (1360–1428) Dare we, in spite of this assertion, call Gentile da Fabriano Umbrian? He was born there; he studied under his own townsman, ALLEGRETTO NUZI (1346–1385), whose anconas show all these traits we have enumerated; but for our generation he is the painter of the *Adoration of the Magi*, executed at Florence in his 63rd year, a picture belonging less to Umbria than to the splendour of the court which had evidently bedazzled him. The fact is that Gentile when he painted the Adoration was endangered by his own success. In 1410 he had been called to the ducal palace at Venice, and his work there

had brought him the distinction of being made a kind of honorary senator of the city with the substantial reward of a life pension. His visit had one other result in that he had Jacopo Bellini as his pupil there, and so Gentile's passion for colour may have done much to determine the whole trend of the Venetian School.

The *Adoration* at Florence, painted for the Strozzi Chapel of S. Trinita, and now in the Uffizi, for all its sophisticated elements is important in the evolution of art for the countryman's qualities in it. Gentile expressed something of his love for flowers in the Gothic framework, lovingly painting a crowd of exquisitely realised varieties, irises and anemones, cornflowers and daffodils, whilst in the background of the picture he sets a fascinating landscape—mountains with little cities built on their heights as he knew them in Umbria, valleys rich in trees and flowers, a peep of the sea. In the predella of the picture he does more than this, choosing there to be experimental as so many of the painters were; so we have a *Flight into Egypt* with daring effects—a wide panoramic landscape, trees and distant hill city, but, chief of all, a golden sun glowing in one corner of the sky, gilding the rocks on one side with its light. Again, in the scene where the Virgin is adoring the Child, Gentile conceived with infinite daring the idea of making a star-strewn night sky, and then of lighting his picture with radiance from the Divine Infant. There had never been a nocturne painted in Italy before; perhaps only one in the whole world, that of Pol de Limbourg in his Hour Book of twelve years earlier. Looking forward we go straight to Correggio's *La Notte* for the culmination of Gentile's tricky chiaroscuro. We find the sun lighting reiterated by Sienese Giovanni di Paolo twenty-five years

after Gentile had done it, and since the subject is the same it is more than likely that the Siena master borrowed it. We find Fra Angelico influenced by Gentile's work, and Benozzo Gozzoli obviously under tribute to the whole motive of this *Procession of the Magi* for his famous picture in the Riccardi Palace in 1458.[e] Thus this provincial painter is really a figure of importance in the story of art, and deserved the wide reputation he enjoyed in his day. It is sad that so much of his fresco work has perished: that at Venice and that at S. John Lateran at Rome, which Pope Martin called him to do.

In his day and for a century afterwards great men praised Gentile and the happy world of gay colour he created. Even Michel Angelo relaxed the Titan mood before his work, and admitted the charm and gentleness which linked the art and the name of the artist. To-day we regard him as an innovator and an influence, with Venice, Siena and Florence indebted to him; and we may regard him as a true Umbrian in his naïve love of flowers and passionate love of nature.

After this false dawn Umbria was to wait until well into the second half of the 15th century. Curious plague banners and altar-pieces are made by the lesser painters of these country towns, with peasant Madonnas whose rural air is recompensed by the ornate Gothic architecture of their frames. Gozzoli, coming from Florence, was a great influence; Crivelli, from the Venetian territory, was another; Taddeo Bartolo, of Siena, yet another. They encouraged the highly decorated altars and kept alive the narrative style which the Umbrians had always loved. Lorenzo di San Severino,

Boccatis, Niccolo da Foligno, stand at the dim beginning of this Umbrian School. You find their works at Perugia, heavy with gold and submerged in detail. There is an interesting *Crucifixion* in the National Gallery by Niccolo da Foligno, with all the Umbrian characteristics: the group of saints posed at the foot of the Cross, a fine distant landscape, angels in the luminous heaven, and the Crucifixion, treated mystically instead of realistically, and uniting the two planes of the picture. The landscapes in the side panels are equally worthy of attention.

With Bonfigli (1425–1496) we have a more important master, albeit there is still no great quality in the work. He was born in Perugia, and there are a number of his best works in the gallery there. His figures are too often wooden, but he has a sense of composition, and manages his perspective with rare skill for his time and place. How strong the mystical element is in him we see in the *Adoration of the Magi* (National Gallery) with the Crucifixion represented in the same scene just behind the kneeling Kings.

Bonfigli's pupil and Perugino's master (if we will allow the terms to apply where there is little evidence of definite apprenticeship) was Fiorenzo di Lorenzo (1440–1520). A number of his works in Perugia show marked Florentine influences—a hint even of his contemporary Botticelli—but with these the obvious impress of Crivelli and the decorative Venetians. His *Madonna* (National Gallery) reveals these elements yet retains markedly the Umbrian quietude, the Umbrian landscape. Nevertheless, Fiorenzo was not a great master, and it must have been by the urge of some innate power that Perugino came to the forefront of Central Italian art and established its essential characteristics.

PERUGINO. (1446–1523) Perugino's life, as it has come down to us from Vasari's vitriolic pen, is singularly at variance with his art. He is represented as an atheist sneering at religion and the Church, as a miser given from his youth to the obsession of the profit from his works, as a person peevish and jealous of the success of other artists, calculating as to his own. Vasari's prejudices, however, make him an unreliable if amusing chronicler, and although there are these elements in the character and actions of Pietro Vanucci, they constitute but one side of the picture. The probability is that he possessed one of those detached, objective and questioning minds which led him to query the doctrines of the Church, and to view the actions of churchmen with a certain cynicism. His refusal of extreme unction on his deathbed, and his parting witticism that he would like to know what happened to a soul unconfessed, suggests that he at least had the courage of his agnosticism. His decision in youth that if Florence were the place where art really had its vortex that should be the place where he would study it, and the hardships he is recorded as having endured during the process, bespeak his will-power. He seems, indeed, always to have faced life with a robust realism, to have calculated the chances with the utmost logic, and to have acted in strict accordance with that judgment.

Usually it does not matter very much what manner of man an artist was, and this personal anecdotage and gossip is food for lesser minds not stout enough otherwise to retain interest in a man's work. With Perugino, however, the work itself expresses so definite a character, and its appeal is so much of a

reflected mentality, that it comes as a shock when the artist is accused of being the antithesis of the art. For Perugino painted only religious pictures (save the *Love and Chastity* in the Louvre), and he painted them so convincingly that to his own day and throughout the centuries they stood unchallenged as devotional works.

How, then, shall we resolve the paradox? Was it that outside the orthodox virtues of his day he had qualities of mind and spirit which invest his pictures—a love of spacious landscape, a poise of intellectuality which gave his figures calm and dignity—or is it that technical control and a determination to satisfy the requirements of clients is enough? Perhaps some admixture of the two accounts for the success of Perugino's art.

His fundamental intellectualism led him to combat one element in the art of his day. He came to Florence at the time when the passion for lifelikeness was at its fiercest, and he entered Verrocchio's bottega where that flame burned brightest. He brought with him the early training, not only of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo, but that of his other master, Piero della Francesca, who had always aimed at monumentally still design having the static qualities of the best sculpture and architecture. We can imagine Perugino with that analytic mind of his asking what was wrong with the orthodox tendency of this Florentine art, and finding the answer in the lack of Piero's favourite quality. He plans thereupon to build his pictures; he invents geometrical formulæ which will give his work the artistic self-containedness lacked by these Florentines as they are swept along in the flood of high Renaissance thought.

If we accept the orthodox belief that the *Giving of the*

Keys to Peter on the walls of the Sistine is his, we see this aspect of his art as contemporary criticism boldly illustrated. (Recent critics have raised an interesting doubt as to whether this picture is not by Raphael, following on his use of the same scheme for his *Espousal of the Virgin* at Milan, but the theory demands the acceptance of strained hypotheses.) We know, however, that Perugino was one of the artists called to paint the walls of the Sistine, and it would be very typical of this young man of thirty-five to put this spacious composition with its clear planes, its well posed figures, its Umbrian symmetry, against the somewhat turgid compositions of his colleagues. If he did, it was an artistic triumph. He has borrowed much even from Venice, but he has brought art as the corrective of the too much of nature which Florence encouraged.

The long middle period of his work finds him at his greatest, and his greatness is always along lines of conscious composition, allied to his exquisite sense of lovely landscape under glorious light. To 1495 belongs the magnificent *Crucifixion* which we find in the Convent of the Magdalene at Florence. It is the pinnacle of Perugino's art. Every line of the composition has its value; the figures are marvellously posed, the landscape through the three arches superb. It illustrates Perugino's method of building up with single figures, each practically detached, all invested with ecstatic piety and symbolistic values. In all probability it is not, as we often see asserted, that Perugino could not express the figure in action, but that he deliberately chose the static in art; even when he was called upon to complete the *Descent from the Cross*, begun by Filippino Lippo with a maximum of dynamic realistic lines, he adds

only figures in his own deliberate manner of static mysticism.

At the turn of the century Perugino was in his full glory as a painter. His manner had caught the imagination and answered the needs of the time. Whilst other Italian schools had made a choice between the old iconographic art bequeathed from Byzantium and the new humanism, he managed to combine the qualities of both, answering the demands of humanism and those of religion. In 1501 he decorated the Merchants' Hall in Perugia with a great series of prophets, sibyls and virtues. Repetition of his own successes was sapping his strength; there is no longer inspiration in the multitudinous altar-pictures. The sentimentality which had always lurked behind his posed Madonnas and saints grows more insistent; the skilful compositional lines degenerate into attitudinising. Perugino, despite the assertion of his miserliness, was always poorly paid; and we must believe that he accepted a policy of much work for small pay which was bound to be fatal to its quality. He had reverses of fortune with the years. Pope Julius II. turned him out of the work at the Vatican, and put his pupil Raphael in his place. He had a quarrel and an unsuccessful lawsuit with Michel Angelo, accusing his erstwhile friend of libel. So he left Florence and retired to Perugia, painting there until his death, in his 78th year, a somewhat morose and disappointed man for whom Fame's wheel had come full circle.

To-day we tend to find his work too sentimental in its types, poor in modelling compared to the robust contemporary Florentines, monotonous in its conceptions. Nevertheless, he had corrected a tendency in art, and none better than he could give those

wonderful vistas of Central Italian scenery bathed in golden light, that perfect repose which gives his work a kind of spirituality whatever may have been his beliefs.

Perugino's greatest pupil, Raphael, whose prowess so far outshone his master's, carried on and surpassed these qualities; but before we turn to him we must look at other scholars in the busy Perugino bottega. The respective achievements of Pinturicchio, of Lo Spagna, fine as they are, serve best to give us the measure of their great fellow pupil.

PINTURICCHIO (1454–1513) Bernardo di Biagio, to call him rightly, was born at Perugia twelve years after Perugino, and became the head of his bottega there. He, too, seems to have called down the wrath of Vasari, who accuses him also of bad temper and miserliness, and tells a fascinating but erroneous story of his death through chagrin at the removal of a box containing 500 ducats which he intended to purloin. But Vasari, as we have seen, was not above a little criminal libel, and the truth is that Pinturicchio died of neglect when his wife deserted him during his illness.

His art is allied to the narrative phase of Umbrian painting, and is influenced by Gozzoli. Doubtless, too, he must have gone to Venice (probably to buy colours for the Perugino workshop) and there became acquainted with Carpaccio's S. Ursula frescoes and other Venetian narrative painting which we find reflected in his work. He is primarily a tempera painter, not succeeding very well with the oil medium which his master made so popular. Thus it is to his

frescoes to which we must look rather than to such easel pictures as we find occasionally in the galleries. The National Gallery possessions are poorly planned things in spite of a certain narrative charm in the *Return of Ulysses*.

His great work was the decoration of the library of the cathedral at Siena. Probably Raphael helped with it, handing on sketches he had made at Venice; but the series of ten pictures must remain Pinturicchio's outstanding glory. They make excellent use of the space at the artist's command; there is a vivacity in the narrative and a nobility in the architecture and in the landscapes, which reveal Pinturicchio as a fascinating artist. The *Baptism*, on the walls of the Sistine, again shows his power, and its fine landscape bespeaks the Umbrian. But the artist seems to have failed his own talent—perhaps was overshadowed or overworked on the hack painting of the Perugino bottega—and nothing else really approaches the Sienese frescoes. By these, then, let us judge "little and deaf" Pinturicchio.

Lo Spagna, or Giovanni the Spaniard, was one of Perugino's favourite pupils. We know little of his life, but the few works from his hand show a high standard of achievement. It is said that the jealousy of other artists forced him to leave Perugia, and that in 1516 he made Spoleto his home, marrying there and being made a citizen of the town. He has left one of his best works in the Church of S. Maria degli Angeli; but his masterpiece is in the Lower Church at Assisi, an *Enthroned Madonna with Saints*. The National Gallery has an interesting *Agony in the Garden* with a fine landscape, as we would expect from an Umbrian.

RAPHAEL (1483–1520) Dare we class Raphael as belonging to the Umbrian school? True, he was born at Urbino in the Umbrian country; his father Giovanni Santi (1440–1494) took up painting late in life, studied under Piero della Francesca and Melozzo da Forli, and achieved a reputation as an Umbrian painter (we have a Madonna by him in the National Gallery); his first master was Timoteo Viti, who, from Bologna, settled in Urbino and became an Umbrian by adoption; his second master from the age of seventeen or earlier was Perugino himself. For four years he worked in Perugino's bottega at Perugia, and in that four years he did all that Perugino himself could achieve in Umbrian calm and sweetness.

So in his beginnings Raphael is entirely Umbrian, but when he was only twenty-one his second period commenced. He went to Florence and found the city involved in violent æsthetic partisanship before the designs of Leonardo da Vinci and Michel Angelo for the Palazzo Vecchio. What must have surprised him was that neither of these cartoons in the grand manner had anything to do with art as it was understood in his native place. There was, however, up at the monastery of S. Marco a certain Fra Bartolommeo, whose art had affinity with this and also with the Umbrian method, and Raphael became fast friends with the Frate. But his mind, with its extraordinary powers of assimilation, was not likely to stay in the past. The richly endowed youth, who in a few years had risen from the vague promise of the *Dream of a Knight* (National Gallery) to the *Marriage of the Virgin* at Milan, proceeded to take from Florentine painting its wealth of naturalism and humanism. He accomplished the task with the rapidity

of his amazing genius. He began portraiture with a hint of Leonardo's methods in the first results. When he visited Umbria during the next year he painted a fresco with some of the lessons he had picked up from Fra Bartolommeo in it. That same year he painted the *Madonna del Granduca* (Pitti). He has retained the pensiveness learned in Umbria, but dispensed with landscape and all accessories, and improved vastly in his modelling and colouring. The Madonna is somewhat sentimental, as his madonnas were till the last, but the picture had immediacy of appeal. In 1506 he painted the *Madonna of the Goldfish* (Uffizi); and, according to the date upon it, the *Ansidei Madonna*, which, in spite of its place of honour in the National Gallery, is a poor picture for Raphael, so poor that it has been suggested that he post-dated a work of his Perugian student period. *La Belle Jardinière* (Louvre) and the *S. Catharine* (National) also belong to Florentine Raphael.

Toward the end of his stay there, Raphael, certain of his powers, endeavoured to be allowed to put up a competing cartoon against those of Leonardo and Michel Angelo. The call of the grand manner was evidently strong, for beside this claim we have his *Entombment* (Borghese) at this period, a strained study which loses the dignity of his earlier work, the calm of his earlier landscape, and has nothing to replace it: the exaggerated movement and strenuous figures show Raphael as yet unable to compete with the great Florentines.

In 1508, after an amazingly progressive four years in Florence, Raphael was called to Rome. Pope Julius II., the tyrant of artists, had set Michel Angelo, against that artist's own will, to work upon the ceiling of the Sistine

Chapel. Bramante, the Pope's architect, proposed Raphael, who was his fellow-townsman, as the man to decorate the four new antechambers of the Vatican. It was an enormous opportunity. It took the artist to the centre of the artistic and intellectual world, put him into direct competition with Michel Angelo, and gave him a great work. Raphael descended upon Rome as a conquering prince. He had youth, beauty of person, a friendly nature which attracted everybody to him, the assurance of his own genius, the backing of powerful patrons. We read of him riding through the town surrounded by a great body of students and friends. He dressed magnificently, made friends with the great men of the time, and absorbed the humanistic knowledge of the city with as much fervour as he had earlier accepted the provincial piety of Umbria.

This humanism must be looked to for the key of Raphael's Roman period. It had gone to men's heads so that the main ideas of paganism and the Christian Church were inextricably mixed. One writes "the Christian Church" rather than "Christianity," for in the splendour of the Papal court, the powerful cardinals with their palaces, the autocratic Pope lavishing money on his own vast palace whilst Bramante built S. Peter's as the symbol of the world-power and wealth of the Catholic Church, there was little primitive Christianity or of that spirit which S. Francis had revived in Raphael's native Umbria. Contemporary records show us a wave of cynicism passing over these princes of the Church, and at the same time a great interest in the pagan writings. Earnest scholars like Pica della Mirandola sought to establish the unity of the two sets of ideas, believing that in the best of both lay a satisfying philosophy and guide to life. Roughly it may be said that that was what

Raphael wrote on the walls of the *stanze* allotted to him. The first room has religion, law, philosophy and science, and art as the themes of its four walls, whilst its ceiling repeats the theme in symbol and story. The fresco of the *Dispute*, testifying to the truth of the Mass as the symbol of the Church offices, is Raphael's tribute to religion. The opposite wall shows the *School at Athens* where, under the giant statues of Apollo and Minerva, the ancient sages and philosophers lay down their systems; it is the tribute to the human mind. On the third wall he designates the arts in *Parnassus*, a theme which in its open-air motive links him with his Umbrian self, but reveals all his newly-acquired power. *Jurisprudence*, filling the difficult spaces of the window wall so marvellously, was his praise of law. Practically all this work Raphael did himself: an amazing performance and vision for an artist not yet twenty-eight years old.

Unfortunately this first room is the high-water mark of his genius. Three factors affected him: Julius II. was an impatient master, and would never have waited for Raphael to work almost single-handed on the other rooms; life in Rome made its demands upon its favourite; and in 1512 the unveiling of the work of Michel Angelo in the Sistine, with its superhuman grandeur, spurred Raphael to heighten his style in emulation of the man against whom he had pitted himself. Thereafter he worked out designs and left them to be carried out by assistants under the facile hand of Guilio Romano. The *Miracle of Heliodorus*, *Miracle of the Mass*, and *Miracle of the Fire*, fine as they are and powerful as the designs are, have been overpowered by the grand manner which interests itself too much in the human figure in violent action, and they have been

executed by hands which fall short of mastery. Nor have they that impulse for expressing an urgent idea which Raphael had had in the first room. And they are spoiled by his efforts to vie with Michel Angelo's violent foreshortenings and sculpturesque chiaroscuro.

Meanwhile, worldly success crowds in upon him. He is given the task of architect of S. Peter's when Bramante dies; and the new Pope, Leo X., showered commissions upon the artist. He must design a series of great tapestries for the lower walls of the Sistine; he must paint the loggia opening out of his *stanze;* he must paint the Pope's portrait. Another public commission is laid upon him when he is made master of the excavations at Rome. And private commissions and Church orders flow in. The Farnesini Palace, built for the Pope's banker, Chigi, was decorated with a series of frescoes depicting the *Myth of Psyche.* The designs are Raphael's, but the invaluable Guilio Romano, Francesco Penni, and Giovanni da Udine, carried them out. Raphael himself, however, painted the *Galatea* in an adjoining room; and in these crowded years he painted the *Sibyls*, in the church of S. Maria della Pace, and the *Sistine Madonna.*

The designs for the Vatican tapestries are among his most satisfying productions. Seven of the original cartoons, which Rubens saw in the weaving house at Brussels and persuaded Charles I. of England to purchase, are now in South Kensington Museum. They show Raphael in a masterly mood, and are England's greatest Raphael treasures. The tapestries worked from these, after many vicissitudes, are back in a gallery at the Vatican.

The fifty-two scenes which he designed for the Vatican loggias—men have called them "Raphael's Bible"

—reveal him in simpler, more idyllic mood. The Farnesini *Galatea* (painted, as he wrote to Castiglione, not from a model but from his own inward vision) is the highest note of his pagan art, as the *Sistine Madonna*, now at Dresden, and the *Transfiguration* in the Vatican are that of his Christian. And all these belong to these last hurried years. Indeed the *Transfiguration* was in hand when he died, and was finished by Romano and Penni. There is just a hint in these last pictures that Raphael was turning again to his teaching under Perugino, the *Sistine Madonna* being in spirit and technique a purely Umbrian work. But we cannot tell, for in 1524 at only 37 years of age the artist died, and we are left to surmise what line his amazing powers might have taken.

In these three periods, the Umbrian, the Florentine and the Roman, he had touched almost every line of the development of Renaissance art and brought it near perfection. His Madonnas sometimes seem a little sentimental, and the forms of the anatomy too smoothed, but this was a tradition of Umbrian painting—the whole design is the artist's concern rather than carefully realised parts, and Raphael aimed at a synthesis of static grace in these altar pictures rather than emphasis of local form. How well he could realise form we admit when we see him as a portraitist; the portrait of *Pope Julian II.* or the masterly study of *Leo X.* in the Pitti would establish him in that sphere. If we add to these activities his frescoes in the Vatican and elsewhere, the designs for the tapestries, his church paintings, and the thousands of studies he made for these multitudinous works; if we consider this in relation to the fact that he was also architect, sculptor and officer of excavations; if we remember that these activities were compressed

into a space of less than twenty years; then we may get some measure of the artistic and mental stature of the man. Raphael's appeal to our anti-sentimental century is less than it was to the æsthetes of the Ruskin era; nevertheless, with Leonardo, Michel Angelo and Titian, he remains a giant of the Renaissance, and the more a giant in that life gave him so short a time to achieve maturity.

Raphael's Scholars, as we might expect, never really emerge from his shadow. Guilio Romano (1492–1546), whose hand lies so heavily upon much of Raphael's work, seems to have done little on his own account, and a few years after the master's death entered the service of the Duke of Mantua, and worked as architect rebuilding that city. Neither Gianfrancesco Penni (1496–1536) nor Giovanni da Udine (1487–1564) have left us anything noteworthy; and Raphael stands as so many great in art do—the culmination of forces maturing slowly through centuries. Once harvested by a master, they seem to leave no aftermath, only a scanty gleaning for men willing to be contented with such poor results.

Our concern with these scholars of Raphael is chiefly with the works painted in Raphael's own bottega, and sent abroad into the world as his during the days when his work was most in demand. In their own right of art his pupils scarcely exist. Indeed, at the date of his death the whole artistic impulse of Italy was on the wane. Leonardo had died the previous year, and his disciples at Milan weakly carried on the tradition; Florentine art boasted only Andrea del Sarto, who was spared to it until 1534; The Northern schools still had Correggio, who lived till 1534. Only in distant Venice, which had

arrived late, were there a number of masters working until late in the century; and Michel Angelo, the Titan, lived on until 1564, working chiefly as a sculptor, but painting masterpieces when he took up his brush.

LEONARDO AND THE PAINTERS OF MILAN

WHERE in this history of painting shall we place Leonardo da Vinci? In spirit he was superlatively Florentine. He was born in the Arno country at Vinci, and lived as a boy partly there and partly at the house of his father's family in Florence; he was trained under Verrocchio, and was thirty years old when first he left Florence for Milan. A period of eighteen years was passed in the city of his adoption, under the patronage of Lodovico Sforza, Duke of Milan. At the turn of the century, when the French conquered the city, he wandered first to Mantua and Venice, then back to Florence, where he stayed for approximately six years, until 1506, when he was loaned by the Florentines to Charles d'Amboise, the French governor of Milan. Again for six years he worked there, visiting Florence from time to time to execute commissions and to do business in connection with a lawsuit. Then, in 1513, he went to Rome, where his early patrons the Medici were in Papal power, but at the end an offer from the French court which had long been held out to him was accepted, and for the last three years of that wandering and troubled life Leonardo was settled at Cloux in France as "King's painter, engineer and architect, and chief mechanician to the State." Thus Florence and Milan shared his services, In both the Florentine periods there had been triumphs, but Milan had had her day with him, and it was there

that he gathered about him the band of disciples who founded a school of painting after his subtle fashion. But neither city can entirely claim him, any more than painting itself can claim him. Leonardo, most subtle and most modern spirit of the whole Renaissance, defies our classifications.

"This man," cried the Pope, "will never do anything; he thinks of the end before the beginning of his work." It was an accusation and a prophecy. No great artist ever so lacked the concentration of mind to finish his work; or was it that the very diversity of his interests rendered him sterile? The trouble probably was that his mind was primarily scientific—analytic rather than synthetic. Creatively he was an inventor in mechanics: an engineer who in the arts of war could devise pontoons, trench mortars, trenching machines, tanks, explosives and new guns; whilst in peace he could build canals, organise irrigation, come near to inventing the steam engine, and at least experiment with flying, make complicated mechanical toys to amuse himself or his patrons, and invent musical instruments. Analytically he was continually probing the secrets of nature, dissecting corpses in his study of anatomy, and flowers in that of botany; eternally investigating the laws and media of art rather than doing the art; seeking the principles behind movement, force, and the abstraction of mathematics; advocating the Copernican theory before Copernicus, experimental science before Bacon and the evolution of species before Darwin. He was musician and sonneteer, sculptor and architect, wrote a treatise on the human body and one on the art of painting. Leonardo's intellect paralysed his will. He paid in loneliness of spirit and in failure of achievement the price of that desire to know; he was one of destiny's exiles. Asexual or

consciously monastic, he seems to have had no passion save this for knowledge. "If you are alone," he can write, "you will be entirely yours. And if you are accompanied by a single companion you will be half yours. . . . And if you say 'I will withdraw myself entirely,' I tell you you will be held a madman, but lo, thus doing, you will at least be alone." It was a terrible doctrine, not always easy of realisation if we may deduce our evidence from the little *cris de cœur* which occasionally escape on to the margins of his sketches, as though at treachery or falsehood the pent-up affection had momentarily escaped that iron control. No personality of the Renaissance is so rich or subtle a study.

When we regard him as a painter, therefore, it is but one of the activities of his rare mind. "A painter should be universal," he says again. "He must study all he sees." Leonardo obeyed his own dicta too well, and we might have been the richer in his art had he studied less.

He was born in 1452, at Vinci, a love-child; his father a notary, his mother a peasant girl. Early he was taken and educated in his father's house at Florence, and at thirteen we find him in Verrocchio's bottega, where he remained for at least ten years. The *Annunciation*, in the Uffizi (if it be really his), and the one angel in Verrocchio's *Baptism* are the contribution of this period, and the story is current that Verrocchio, confronted by the power of his pupil, forswore painting. When Leonardo left the bottega he worked for some years more in Florence. We have the *Annunciation* of the Louvre, refined in repetition, innumerable sketches and diagrams as the artist drifts into the scientist; then the unfinished loveliness of the rich *Adoration of the Magi*, now in the Uffizi, a commission from the monks at Scopeto, who, after waiting sixteen years whilst Leonardo made scores of

studies, transferred their commission to Filippino Lippi. To these last years of the Florentine first period probably belong the *Madonna of the Rocks* (Louvre) and the *Madonna and S. Anne*. They already show him in full power: the typically metallic colouring, the emphatic chiaroscuro, the control both of colour and design by intellect rather than emotion. Leonardo has entered his kingdom as a painter.

In 1483 he offered his services to Lodovico Sforza. His letter enumerating his powers is a remarkable document, showing how far already he has strayed from the painter's path. It covers very many branches of military and civic engineering, and adds sculpture and painting almost airily. We do not know which of his wide claims intrigued the Duke; he may have gone to Milan chiefly to undertake the colossal bronze equestrian statue which the Duke planned in honour of his father. He went with a silver lute he had created, shaped like a horse's head, and perhaps that, too, was a false start, for he was destined to waste himself terribly planning entertainments, masques and pageants for this expensive court. The horse became almost the symbol of Leonardo's failure, as Michel Angelo reminded him in his taunt years afterwards: "Thou who didst model a horse and could not cast it in bronze." For many years, as his sketch-book proves, he designed and re-designed that colossal figure. It was 1493 when a clay model, at least, was finished and set up, but even so, it was never completed nor cast; and when, in 1500, the French occupied the city, the *Cavallo* was made the target for the Gascon bowmen, and destroyed. This fate of destruction seems to have overhung Leonardo's works. The *Last Supper*, which he commenced almost as soon as he went to Milan, was not finished until 1498, and shortly afterwards

began to perish because the tempera had been put on dry plaster. In design it was the perfect expression of Leonardo's theory, "That painting is greatest which through the postures of the body shows the emotions of the soul." It remains Leonardo's greatest work, and, in the monumentality of its design and spirit, one of the noblest paintings in the world. Two years after its completion Leonardo's Milanese life was broken when Milan fell before the French, and Lodovico fled.

For a time Leonardo wandered; then he went to Florence, and enjoyed a little of the taste of success with the exhibition of the *Battle of the Standard*, and of his cartoon of *S. Anne*, upon which he had probably worked in his last Milanese days. Florence made holiday round the one picture, and the other became the centre of such controversy in its rivalry with Michel Angelo's *Pisa* cartoon that Leonardo stood momentarily at the forefront of art. But he did not complete the works; and although we have the lovely *S. Anne* in Burlington House, London, we know the Battle cartoon only from sketches of parts. At this time, too, he painted the wife of Francesco del Giocondo, the *Mona Lisa*, whose disquieting personality and unity of soul with revealing form was so much to Leonardo's taste. So much has been written about the world-famous picture, and so much of it is personal reaction to this touchstone of art, that one need not here discuss it. A passage in Pater's *Renaissance*, as beautiful as the picture itself, is the great poetic interpretation of its meaning; but whether we accept this or not, the technical achievement of this treasure of the Louvre is its sufficient apologia.

In 1506 Leonardo was loaned by the Florentines to the French governor at Milan, and there he was forced to do that second version of the *Madonna of the Rocks*,

which is now in the National Gallery. About this time, too, he did the *S. Anne* of the Louvre. Then for the rest of his life that intensive dissipation of thought and energy continued. In 1513 he went to Rome under the patronage of his old masters the Medici—Rome of the recently unveiled Sistine ceiling and the Raphael *stanze*—but the sixty-year-old painter was not to be tempted. For three years he followed Guiliano de Medici, then he accepted the invitation of the French king and went to the Château of Cloux, near Amboise, where, in 1519, he died.

His few works are but part of his claim to place as a great artist. His note-books, his sketch-books, the studies scattered in the museums of the world, his scientific theories of painting, and some quality of the mind which invests all these have made Leonardo a supreme master. His austere chiaroscuro influenced art as much as any discovery of the Renaissance; his practice and his theories became part of the painter's heritage.

For so fine a teacher as Leonardo must have been, the work of his pupils is disappointing. Before his coming to Milan there had been some sort of school there founded by FOPPA OF BRESCIA (1427–1515) a pupil from that famous school of Squarcione. BORGONONE (1455–1523), his pupil, whose *Marriage of the Two Catherines* and other works are in the National Gallery, was painting at Milan. One good portrait painter was ANDREA DA SOLARIO (1460–1515). He had a very masculine power which he usually imparted to his heads, adding a touch of sweetness in the wide sweeps of distant country. The portraits in the National Gallery show him in this mood, his modelling obviously influenced from Venetian sources. He was one of the painters who succumbed to Leonardo's influence in Milan.

The *Madonna of the Green Cushion*, of the Louvre, is his confession of it, "tardily come off," if we may quote. Macrino D'Alba and Bramantino also belong to this transition, with the reflection of the usual Northern Italian influences across their early work.

Leonardo's coming swept almost everything into the new method. His chiaroscuro whereof the shadow was a slightly coloured darkness, his highly individualised women and feminine men, his curiously metallic palette, became the common property of his own pupils, and of practically all the Milanese artists. The sweetness of expression tended, in less able hands, to become a simper, the gentleness of the men to degenerate to weakness, the cold colour to become dead, and the whole method of the Leonardesque suffered. Ambrogio da Predis (1455–1506), Leonardo's partner rather than pupil, managed to retain some individuality, however. He was particularly himself in his portraits, but he echoed Leonardo in subject pictures as his wings for the *Madonna of the Rocks* reveal. Bernardino di Conti also remains individual. Boltraffio (1467–1516), whose best work is the *Head of Christ* at Bergamo, was a nobleman who stayed with Leonardo and carefully studied and often copied his effects, but could never have been a great painter. Luini (1475–1529) was a more considerable painter. He made many journeys around the cities of Lombardy, painting in fresco. In the cities by the lakes we meet much of his work. Then he came to Milan, and thereby under the influence of Leonardo. There was a third period when he came near to emancipating himself from that influence; but it was too strong, and practically all the later work we have from him is Leonardesque. He is very well represented at the Louvre; but, in common with all artists of this school

as we should expect, it is at the Brera Gallery at Milan that we must look for his greatest representation. Ruskin was a particular partisan of Bernardino Luini, but we tend to find him too much an echo of the master-painter of the Lombard School. That school belongs almost entirely to Leonardo da Vinci, the artist who could inspire others to do what his own mind was too fertile to achieve.

THE PAINTERS OF THE NORTHERN CITIES

WHILST in Florence, Siena and throughout the Umbrian region we can trace a fairly orderly development of art, resisting or accepting the influence of humanism, passing methods and ideas on from master to pupil in a recognisable evolution, the cities of the Northern Central part of Italy seem to come to spontaneous artistic life about the middle of the 15th century, and to lose impetus and slip back to inanition about the middle of the 16th along with the rest of Italy. Thus Milan, despite the impetus which Leonardo gave it towards the end of the century; thus Bologna and Ferrara; Brescia and Cremona and Verona. Padua, which one might have expected to evolve rapidly from the time of the wonderful Giotto works in the Arena Chapel, has a trickle of unimportant masters through the 14th and early 15th century, then suddenly sweeps into an artistic life of its own with the foundation of an academy there by Squarcione. It carries Parma with it on the one hand, and leads us to Correggio; on the other it feeds the important stream of Venetian art through the powerful influence of the Bellinis. Venetian painting, indeed, is the really strong current here in the North, and tends to draw many men from these cities. It has a flow as orderly and traceable as Florence or Siena; it is purer painting than the Florentine, inasmuch as it is less influenced by sculpture and less the servant of architecture, and therefore depends for expression upon

the unalloyed media of the painter's art. Its impetus carried Italian art along when almost everywhere else the power had failed. But before we trace that stream of noble painters, we may stray in the towns which stretch across the plains above the Apennines.

Their artistic life depended probably upon some knowledge of the great things being done in Florence, or else radiates from the important teaching effort of Squarcione at Padua. Sometimes it is an echo from Venice, and more rarely from Umbria. We can only think of art as being "in the air" in Italy; churches needing their altar-pieces or frescoes for their chapel walls, and the business of providing these a serious and attractive means of livelihood to the craftsmen. These little cities of the Northern plains had their needs like any others, and competent local artists supplied them.

Because his more than a hundred scholars were so great an influence, it is well to start with the school of Squarcione at Padua. Padua had had artists before the foundation of this famous academy: GUARIENTI (1338–1370), whose work we find frequently in Northern Italy, marked by Giottoësque influence on a more primitive art; MENABUOI, who came from Florence, was influenced by Giotto's disciples, but has conceptions of his own, as his frescoes in S. Giorgio at Padua prove; JACOPO D'AVANZO, of Bologna, who came to Verona and Padua to work towards the end of the 14th century, and who, with ALTICHIERO, executed the works in the Oratory of St. George at Padua, a series worthy to be compared with much that was being done by the more famous artists of contemporary Florence. In the early part of the new century Florence influenced Padua strongly through the visits of certain artists. Donatello came to work on the bronze reliefs of the altar of

S. Anthony; Uccello, with his passion for perspective, and Filippo Lippi, visited the city; and Francesco Squarcione saw a mission in establishing an academy of painting which would incorporate the new science of these visiting Florentines with the principles of the antique for which he had a personal enthusiasm.

SQUARCIONE (1394–1474) is scarcely to be considered a painter in his own right, but a brilliant schoolmaster. His alliance of the new science with the newly-discovered traditional makes him a typical son of Padua, most academic of cities; and he travelled throughout Greece and Italy studying and collecting antique marbles. The school stood for firm definition, a sculpturesque quality and an enamel hardness in the painting. Mantegna was its greatest pupil, and from Mantegna we have influences carrying over to Correggio at Parma and to the Venetians through the Bellinis. Crivelli was his pupil, and carried on the style of garlands of fruit and flowers and the hard enamel in colouring. Schiavone from distant Dalmatia, whose work is so like Crivelli's, proudly signs himself "Pupil of Squarcione." Cosimo Tura, was of the school, and initiated at Ferrara a local tradition of sculpturesque anatomy and hard light and shade.

MANTEGNA (1431–1506) Mantegna, Squarcione's greatest pupil, was also one of the most important figures in Italian art. A little neglected to-day, overshadowed by the Florentines and the spectacular Venetians who followed him, he was in his own time recognised as a master, and he made innovations in art practice which were enormous in their influence. Squarcione adopted him as his own son, and

evidently he was a precocious lad, for at thirteen he was admitted into the Painters' Guild at Padua. With others of the Academy pupils, he was given the work of painting the frescoes for the S. Christopher Chapel of the Church of the Eremitani at Padua; and, though he was only twenty-one when he commenced, the result made him famous throughout Northern Italy. Three years later despite his foster-father's wishes, Mantegna married the daughter of Jacopo Bellini, and, largely as the result of the estrangement caused by this, he severed his connection with Squarcione two years later. About this time he painted the altar-piece at S. Zeno in Verona, and if the Eremitani frescoes had shown the influence of his master's training in classicism and in perspective, this work carried his theories an important step farther. Mantegna used the highly decorative frame as an architectural link between the wall and the picture. He made the bottom line of the frame the eye-level, and carried all lines down to it. Thus practically no floor appears within the picture, and figures in the depth of the composition are shown cut off, as it were, by the frame. It was the logic of the law of perspective—a logic which in this and other directions Mantegna rigorously pursued. It makes of the picture an open-fronted box with its lower line on the eye-level of the spectator, an arrangement destined to become the practice of the early Venetian School.

Mantegna's growing fame opened for him a great opportunity. The Gonzaga family, wealthy and generous art patrons, were established at neighbouring Mantua, and Mantegna was invited to enter their service. After some hesitation he moved to Mantua, and commenced work on their palace which was to add greatly to his own fame and profoundly to influence art development. His

work there on the *Camera degli Sposi* pursued his logic of perspective. He literally painted away the architecture of the room, and, through the curtained arches with which he replaced it in pigment, he showed events in the records of the Gonzaga family set with most careful illusion against open-air scenery or pavilions. The series was important in two particulars: firstly, that he had boldly chosen neither religious nor mythological subjects, but had shown everyday people engaged in ordinary affairs; secondly, that he had carried to its utmost logic this scheme of periscopical perspective. He painted out the ceiling and put there an open balcony; cupids violently foreshortened, as one would see them were they standing there, lean against his painted balustrade; peacocks strut upon it, maids lean over looking down into the room; whilst apparently above this active scene being enacted on the roof one sees the sky with clouds. It was a triumph of illusionism. In the history of painting it is important, because we find Correggio repeating the method, and after him the whole Baroque School. It is well to remember that it began with Mantegna's application of the lessons he learned at Squarcione's academy and from Donatello. His other outstanding work for the Gonzagas was the painted tapestries of the *Triumphs of Cæsar*, of which we have nine at Hampton Court. They have all the experimentalism and classicism of the master. In 1495 he painted the *Madonna of Victory*, now in the Louvre, for the Duke; but affairs were not going well with the Gonzagas, the younger generation were not overgenerous with their court painter, and he himself was a remarkably difficult and quarrelsome person. He had a passion for collecting antiques, as his master had done; he wasted money on building; he wasted money on

lawsuits. In 1488 he went to Rome for a year or more, and his style broadened a little as a result of that visit. At the end of the century he was working for Isabelle d'Este, and it was for her study and in strict accordance with her directions that he painted the *Parnassus* (Louvre) and *Minerva Expelling the Vices*. Experimenter that he is, we find him being the first man in Italy to engrave his own pictures. But all his genius, which might have been better used in Florence at the height of the Renaissance there, did not avail the seventy-year-old artist at Mantua. He died poor—heart-broken, it is said, at the enforced sale of a favourite antique statue of Faustina—and his studio pictures, including the daringly foreshortened *Christ* (Brera, Milan) and the *Triumphs of Scipio* (National Gallery) were sold to pay his debts.

Much of Mantegna's work is executed in a cold colouring of grey-brown monochrome which intensifies its sculpturesque feeling. This and his method of using the lower line of the picture as eye-level gives the feeling of bas-relief rather than painting. The *Samson and Delilah* and the *Triumph of Scipio* in the National Gallery illustrate these traits. His fine *Garden of Gethsemane* there, which is much more ordinary in its methods, should be compared with Bellini's study of the same subject, since both were the interpretation of a sketch made by old Jacopo Bellini. Mantegna's shows a study of rock forms which we often find in his work. One other picture of his to which attention must be called is the triptych of the *Adoration* in the Uffizi. He has made an extraordinary effect by using a concave panel for the centre picture to get depth of perspective.

When Mantegna fails it is through loyalty to his æsthetic theories. He stands as one of the boldest innovators and best craftsmen of the Renaissance,

comparable to anybody of his own date anywhere in Italy, and by far the greatest figure of the North.

CARLO CRIVELLI (1430–1493) Yet another pupil from the academy of Squarcione was Carlo Crivelli. He was a Venetian by birth, probably first studied under Vivarini, but was attracted by the growing reputation of the teaching at Padua, and early went there. We have no trace of his having returned to Venice. He seems very thoroughly to have assimilated the classic decoration methods of the school—the marble thrones, the garlands of fruit and flowers, the heavy architectural accessories—and to have repeated them in every city in the Adriatic Marches. He was thus influential in spreading this style, but remains himself the greatest exponent of it, as his many works in the galleries testify.

One recognises immediately his profusion of gilt, his flowers, fruit and birds, his carefully, decoratively painted representation of the patterns of rich brocades, his veined marbles, his use of real stones for rings, crowns and staffs. It is a highly decorative art, ostentatious in its elaborate richness, but with a charm of its own.

The National Gallery has a surprising number of good works by this artist, foremost among which must be mentioned the less typical *Annunciation* and the *Dead Christ*. Many of his best works have gone to America.

The Padua academy extends its influence southward to Ferrara and Bologna through Marco Zoppo (1440–1498) and Cosimo Tura (1431–1495). Zoppo, who was a Bolognese, adds nothing to the manner with which we are familiar in Crivelli, his *Dead Christ* in the National Gallery showing every affinity with that master. Tura's

work in one of its aspects has these same characteristics, and, indeed, this very picture was for many years thought to be his. He was fortunate, however, in that he found service under the House of Este, then reigning at Ferrara, a court which for scholarship was unequalled throughout Italy. Roger van der Weyden visited this court, bringing his marvellous Flemish influence, and Tura founded another style from the Northern culture which was affected by the House of Este. It is gaunt and rather terrible, using the sculpturesque training and cold colouring of Padua with a new dramatic power. The *Madonna and Child* most fantastically enthroned and the ascetic *S. Jerome* in the National Gallery illustrate the two phases of Tura's genius.

FRANCESCO COSSA (1430–1480)

Tura's pupil was Francesco Cossa. He has interest for us in that he was the author of a series of frescoes in the palace at Ferrara which, like Mantegna's work at neighbouring Mantua, are purely secular. These depict the twelve months of the year under the beneficent rule of the Este. They yield us an invaluable picture of contemporary life, as the Hour Books of the Flemish painters had done earlier in the century. Possibly van der Weyden had introduced this idea to the Ferrarese court, and Cossa (it is thought with the help of Tura himself) carried it out in these frescoes. A *S. Vincent* in the National Gallery is by this master.

About 1470 Cossa went to Bologna, and a little later his pupil, LORENZO COSTA, went there also. Whatever Costa had learned at Ferrara some influence from the South must have been brought to bear upon it. Was it that Francia, who became his friend and housemate

and his business partner, gave back to him some element of painting learned elsewhere? It is an interesting problem of art awaiting solution; for although Lorenzo Costa, in his own strength, is not a very important master (albeit he did some interesting portraiture and worked in a humanistic vein to express the conceits of Isabelle d'Este), his pupil and friend, Francia, is a noble figure.

FRANCIA (1450–1517) Francesco Rabolini worked for forty years as a goldsmith and medallist. He practised, too, the art of niello-engraving, inlaying silver or steel with black. These arts, for which he was famous in his city, and of which he was justly proud, for he always called himself "aurifer," he practised in the bottega to which Costa came when he settled in Bologna in 1483. When Francia turned painter, however, it was in the pure Umbrian spirit that he worked. Perhaps Perugino, that great Central Italian influence, had set his steps in this path during some visit to Bologna; perhaps his own temperament led him to results in exact harmony with the Umbrian school, for he is said to have been a devout and pious man. Whatever the cause, Francia achieved some lovely things in art. His quiet, posed Madonnas, his symbolistic saints, the spirituality of his altar-pieces, as well as those lovely light-filled skies against which he places them, or the peeps of distant open country in the Umbrian manner: these things make Francia's art comparable only to that of Perugino himself, or to that of Raphael of the first period. His pictures breathe nobility and serenity.

His finest is the *Madonna and Saints* in the Bentivoglio Chapel at Bologna, but England possesses one of the most appealing in the pathetic *Pietà* and the *Madonna*

and S. Anne, the two parts of the Bonvisi altar-piece in the National Gallery; whilst a portrait by him there shows how fine he could have been in this direction.

Another and earlier pupil of Costa's was Giovanni Lutini, whom we call Dosso Dossi (1479–1542). He and his brother, Battista, both studied under Costa, and later at Rome and Venice. They returned to Ferrara to work in the Ducal Palace. Usually their subjects are mythological and show the greatest sophistication. Dosso was the friend of Ariosto, and shows in his painting something of the quality of mind of the poet. In Venice Dossi enriched his work by contact with Giorgione, cultivating his rich subtlety of colour and of chiaroscuro. He became one of the pronounced influences upon Correggio.

One feels, however, that the impulse of the true Ferrarese-Bologna School is wearing thin. There is, indeed, only one other painter who need be mentioned: Garofalo (1481–1559) worked in various of these cities of the North, and then became Raphael's assistant at the Vatican. Later he returned to Ferrara, and it is there we find his best work (including some good portraits) although he is represented in many galleries. One notes especially his *Entombment* (Borghese) and *Apparition of the Virgin* (Dresden). But all the latent power of the North had gone to Correggio of Parma, and it is in his wide achievement we must look for the autumn glory of the Northern schools.

CORREGGIO (1494–1540)

Of the early life and training of Antonio Allegri we know very little. That he was born at the little township of Correggio, near Parma, that he left there for a brief period about his seventeenth year and went to Mantua, that he

returned after three years and stayed for the rest of his life working at Parma or at Correggio itself—these are the few outstanding facts. The influence of Costa and of Francia seems to be on his work, but we have no evidence of his having come into direct touch with these masters, who would then have been settled at Bologna. The most notable influence is that of Mantegna, whom, in one startling aspect, he emulated. We meet it first when he is commissioned to decorate the Convent of S: Paolo, at Parma, about 1517–18. With the methods of Mantegna in the decoration of the *Camera degli Sposi* in mind he treats the whole ceiling as a heavy trellis pierced by ovals in each of its sections, and through those ovals we get peeps of nude boys at play, a jolly rout of liveliness taking place apparently beyond the ceiling which he had painted away. Its technique and its spirit were the typical Correggio. He must have loved the sensuous world, adored the rosy limbs of children; and it is not without a certain conscious or subconscious significance that he drew these laughing, playing children beyond the confines, as it were, of the convent.

From the first his mastery is amazingly sure. The studies of earlier painters, the careful learning of the school of Squarcione, the long evolution of painting at Florence seem to be ready to his hand. He can place the human figure in any position, achieve marvellous feats of foreshortening (it is said he made little clay models to work from). More than this—and herein lies his primary claim as an artist—he can get a softness and grace into the drawing; make exquisite use of light and shade, filling his shadows with reflected light; carry the colour to a richness and subtlety equalled only by the Venetians. So he stands for us: the painter of all the pleasant emotions and of the sensuous joy of life,

with a technique at his command which enables him to express anything in form and colour. It is the combination of these qualities which constitutes what Carlyle called "the Correggiosity of Correggio." Where the Florentines and his immediate predecessors in these Northern schools had used line, he used colour, softening it away at the edges so that the pictures themselves had sensuous charm. In this, as in his mastery of illusion, there is a ripeness destined to become easily over-ripe; and, moreover, his taste was too uncertain to control the technique which genius had put to his hand.

His next great works were at once *tours de force* and artistic failures. In 1520 he was called upon to decorate the choir and dome of S. Giovanni, at Parma; in 1530 the dome of the cathedral. The results are bewildering. As Mantegna had done at Mantua, and he himself in the convent of S. Paolo, so now he paints away the domes. The effort at the cathedral caused a scandal and an outcry, the worthy church fathers refused to pay Correggio's price until Titian, called in to arbitrate, hailed it as a masterpiece, and told them that the dome inverted and filled with ducats would be the just price.

Correggio had painted a Mantegnaësque balustrade. Titanic figures stand around it, elegant nudes move in the spaces apparently behind it, figures climb over or lean against it; higher in the dome the Evangelists and Early Church fathers float down on clouds sustained by gracious angelic figures, which in Correggio's conception means gracious young men and women with entrancing human forms, for he was not going to spoil those exquisite nudes with unconvincing wings; higher yet the angels crowd in increasing multitude in every posture, marvellously foreshortened as though seen from below, a bewildering array of rosy limbs, floating downwards,

gazing upwards, filling a seeming heaven in the height of which Mary is carried to the golden light of Godhead. Correggio's *Assumption* was a marvel of creation. Parma, looking up into that exuberance of life, took refuge in scorn: they called it *un guazzatto di rane*, a *ragout* of frogs, to indicate their disapproval of this infinite variety of legs which the artist's forced perspective gave them for angels. It was, in a way, a just criticism, and Correggio seems to have taken it to heart. Losing his wife by death about this time also, this artist of the abounding joy and vitality of life retired to his native town, and henceforth he painted only easel pictures. Still his mood holds: his goddesses or his Holy Mothers remain all-too-lovely women; his children, be they Cupid or Jesus, are creatures with all nature's charm. There is something slightly erotic about his work no matter what the subject; but when we have said that, what fascination there is in it, too.

The *Education of Cupid* (National Gallery), the *Danæ* in the Borghese; the wealth of his works in Dresden, in particular the famous *La Notte Nativity* where the light proceeds from the radiant Babe and goldenly pervades the rich shadows; the companion picture *The Day* of the Parma Academy; the *Virgin of the Basket*, again in the National Gallery; the *Marriage of S. Catherine* of the Louvre; the *Leda* in Berlin; one and all, they are masterpieces in his particular style. That that style had within itself the elements of its own undoing cannot be doubted. His experiments with the domes were the beginning of Baroque with its figures floating down through the architecture; his women with their too-feminine grace were on the borderlines of sentimentality, and often strayed over those lines. The grand style was undermined by this facile creator. The old religious austerity

no longer held an artist's mind in check, and his subjects were of this earth in all its vital beauty. At that he grows lyrical, and we must adjudge a Correggio from the lyrical standpoint rather than from the epic, the elegaic or the devotional aspect of other places and times.

In spite of this far-reaching influence of the painter of Parma, however, there was little immediate copying of his methods by men of any count. His technical power was probably beyond them; and, with anything less than that, imitation of his mannerisms was fatal. One man only might come within measurable reach of him: PARMIGIANO (1504–1540), who took from him much of his method, but turned to nobler models in Raphael and Michel Angelo. Sir Joshua Reynolds greatly admired Parmigiano's later work, and exemplified his *Moses Breaking the Tables of the Law*, at S. Maria, Parma, as a triumphant assimilation of Michel Angelo's ideals and draughtsmanship. Much of his work, however, seems to us mannered and unreal. The *Vision of S. Jerome* (National Gallery) has around it the fascinating legend that the artist was painting it when Rome was being sacked in 1527, and was so intent upon his task that he did not notice the soldiery breaking into the room —concentration which so affected the mercenaries of Charles V. that they withdrew and left him undisturbed. Whether Parmigiano might have fulfilled the promise we have in this and other pictures we cannot tell, for during the latter part of his life he turned from art and devoted himself to alchemy, dying at the early age of thirty-five.

Cupid Making his Bow, at Vienna, is his happiest secular work; and the altar-piece at Bologna his finest religious picture. So in the unfulfilled promise of this artist

another of the streams of the Renaissance lost itself in minor painting. It had flowed far in the period of a little more than a hundred years since Squarcione founded his school at Padua, and it had spread widely; in the 16th century all over Italy the impulse towards art was destined to fail; and that of the Northern cities, weakened by the mere exuberance of Correggio, failed early.

VENICE; AND THE COLOUR OF LIFE

In this art of the Renaissance, Venice came late, so late that although her painters outstayed almost all others her great days lasted only little more than a hundred years—from the coming of the Bellinis and of Antonella da Messina in 1475 to the passing of Tintoretto in 1594. Nevertheless, the preparations for that art were long maturing in the nature of the city itself and of her people; and during the period of florescence it put forth a glory entirely individual and characteristic.

The history of Venice herself was the first factor in her art. She had her shadowy beginnings when the refugees from Attila's Huns fled to the comparative safety of the marshes of her coasts; her actual beginnings when, in the year 810, some of these founded a city on the Rialto Island. The position was as fortunate as it was daring. It committed Venice to a life of seafaring, and it made her the gate of Italy towards the East—the gate, one would say, of Europe, for over the Brennen Pass the Teutonic peoples brought their merchandise to her quays. Early she set up a trade of her own in salt, later in glass; always she was a clearing-house between East and West; finally a city of bankers as an inevitable evolution. Her trade demanded a fleet of cargo vessels and a navy to clear the seas of pirates; she created them as she created all else at her need. Then, with the launching of the Fourth Crusade her great opportunity

came, for not only was it from Venice that the armies sailed (and Venice, like the trader she was, loaned her transport at a price for the purpose), but they were thrown against her one worthy rival, Constantinople, and Venice grew rich on the loot from that city. For centuries material prosperity accumulated about her, and by some happy chance nobody deemed it desirable to attack her until she was already too strong to be attacked successfully. Charlemagne even did not regard her as belonging to that Italy which he added to his Empire. She could rightly claim the title of The Serene. Her government, under the Presidency of the Doges, took the form of a benevolent oligarchy; its traditions were aristocratic with just enough democracy to save any threat of change. Moreover, with their city so prosperous her people bothered little about the form of government so long as it was adequate, and although the serenity was occasionally disturbed, she suffered to nothing like the extent we record of Florence, of Milan, of the other communes.

Into this prosperity at its height, before yet the discovery of America had changed the vortex of the world's trade and treasure, Venetian art was born. Until this latter end of the 15th century Venice had bought her art from foreign cities as she could buy any other luxury. Her great Palace of the Doges she had entrusted to other hands to decorate. Then, too, she was a city of marble. The sea air was not kind to frescoes, and her great cathedral of S. Mark's she had decorated with mosaics when other cities would have painted the walls. Her palaces depended rather upon exquisite tracery of coloured marble for decoration than upon extraneous art. She sometimes used canvas stretched on wood, and treated the surface of the tempera with varnish

to save it from the all-pervading damp; but the art of painting in the early centuries did not belong to her.

When Antonella da Messina, cosmopolitan that he was, returned from his journeyings in the Netherlands with that precious knowledge of oil painting, and made his stay in Venice, the opportunity of a distinctive art of her own opened up. By chance, at this time her own somewhat uninspired Murano school, which specialised in the manufacture of a stereotyped variety of altar painting, received fresh impetus from the coming of Giovanni Alemanus, or John the German, who brought to the Vivarini family at the head of the school new ideas from the Gothic North. The Bellinis, sons of her own son Jacopo, were back from their stay in Padua with the influence of Mantegna and the academy of Squarcione strong upon them. Wealthy patrons were everywhere ready to buy any luxury to make more gay and coloured a life already flooded with colour. The schools, the churches, the city and many of her citizens were enormously rich, and ready to buy pictures as men to-day buy motor-cars. And out of these elements Venetian art was born.

The Craftsmen-Painters of Murano.

The Murano school of Venetian painters until the time of the coming of Antonello da Messina is of no greater importance than the primitive Venetian paintings. It had long existed as a body of painters working anonymously with the other craftsmen on the Island of Murano, providing Venetian-cum-Byzantine altar-pieces with ornate gold frames. We know of these Murano painters chiefly that they quarrelled with the gilders as

to whose department the gilding of the backgrounds rightfully belonged, and that their own guild had very rigorous regulations as to membership, apprenticeship and the rest. We know of their work that it borrowed cheerfully from any source, was influenced strongly in the first part of the 15th century by the Paduan academy of Squarcione, and again by the coming of a German master known as Giovanni Alemanus. He worked with the first of the Vivarini family, whose name has come down to us—Antonio—but there is nothing strongly individual in their work, and we have only the ornate Gothic anconas tending to much fretwork at the top of the frames, and retaining the characteristics of early Venetian altar-pieces in having a line of full-length saints on the first tier and of half-lengths on the upper one. The nephew of this Antonio, called Alvise, and the younger brother, Bartolommeo, came strongly under the influence of the Sicilian visitor, and by that token became people of importance in Venetian art. For it was a world of jog-trot achievement until Antonello brought his new ideas with their enormous potentialities.

ANTONELLO DA MESSINA (1444–1493) Authorities have differed violently as to how he obtained his knowledge. Vasari tells us that he saw some Flemish pictures in Sicily, and forthwith journeyed to the Low Countries and learned their methods from Jan van Eyck. When it was realised that Jan van Eyck died before Antonello was born this theory was so violently discredited that the whole idea of his journey to the North suffered, and it was suggested that he saw pictures by the Flemish masters in his native place and in Naples,

where we know him to have been, and learned his precious secret from travelling Northerners. There is every possibility, however, that he did study in Flanders, not from Jan van Eyck but from some of his pupils, for his knowledge seems very thorough. It was not only the technique of the oil medium so invaluable to Venice which he brought, but a sense of volume in his draughtsmanship such as no other painter in Italy at that time possessed, unless it were Piero della Francesca. It was a remarkable contribution. Antonello's portraits give one a feeling of three dimensions which no painter before him had achieved. The result is a strange sense of existence within the frame. Look, for example, at his *Condottiere* in the Louvre, or his *Young Man* in our National Gallery. They are almost terrifyingly alive, at an age when the best Florentines were getting little more than two-dimensional profile decorations as portraits. His *S. Jerome*, in the National Gallery, shows him as having learned from the Northern painters this same sense of volume applied to the setting. The result is a genre picture in spirit. We realise that what has attracted the artist is not the portrayal of a saint for the edification of church worshippers, but the study of a complication of arches leading into the picture surface. Antonello, indeed, had little concern with saintliness nor with religion: neither, must it be said, had Venice. She was serene and prosperous, and that was hardly the atmosphere wherein the Christian religion in its primitive sense could flourish. It had its place as yet another of the graces and adornments of life; but in reflecting it Venetian painting was never spiritual. Antonello, man of the world that he was, brought to that painting enormously more technical power, but sent it one step further along this road of materialism.

He himself had progressed from the early *Salvator Mundi* (National Gallery) to this powerful control of his medium for the expression of cubic volume. The result gave the feeling of a firm hold upon the earth, and the Venetians adopted it wholeheartedly. Religion, emotion, decoration, his work had not; but it had the power of building a world of its own inside the picture surface, of creating men and women instead of paint there; and Venice, satisfied with any reflection of her own pleasant world and people, accepted it entirely.

ALVISE VIVARINI adopted it for the work of the Murano school, and produced both altar-pieces and portraits in it, as his contributions to the National Gallery reveal. They, too, have little charm in colour, have much of Antonello's heavy shadows, but a strength of building which confess how great was the influence of this Sicilian when we compare them with the earlier work of any of the Murano painters. At one point, however, we find Antonello of Messina the debtor rather than the creditor of the Venetians. That is in the *Crucifixion* (National Gallery). Here is the quietude, the spaciousness, the graciousness of the one other great influence upon Venetian painting of the time: that of Giovanni Bellini, lately returned from Padua, and by far the greatest of early Venetian painters.

GIOVANNI BELLINI (1430–1515) When one says that Venetian painting is essentially non-religious it is reckoning without this first great master, for Giovanni Bellini was fundamentally a religious painter and remained one despite the change of fashion as Venice followed the

dictates of the new humanism and her own instincts. He and his half-brother, Gentile, were brought up in close touch with Mantegna during the residence of their father at Padua; their sister married the Paduan artist. Jacopo, their father, had been a pupil of Gentile da Fabriano, the Umbrian. Here, then, were the formative influences on Giovanni: the Umbrian spirituality and quietude conveyed through his father, and the sculpturesque classicism of the school of Squarcione through Mantegna. It was an excellent mixture, and for nearly one half of his career as a painter Giovanni worked on it.

We surmise that both he and his brother stayed in their father's bottega, accepting his leading until his death in 1470, for they seem to have achieved nothing remarkable of their own until approximately this date. Nevertheless, Giovanni's reputation must have been established, for he was called to work on the Council Chamber of the Doge's Palace, but his work there perished with much else in the fire of 1477. The *Blood of the Redeemer* (National Gallery) and the famous *Pietà* (Brera, Milan) show the marked Mantegna influence; the flesh colour is cold, the modelling sculpturesque. The *Agony in the Garden* is also one of these early works. We find its arrangement in old Jacopo's sketch-book, and both Giovanni and Mantegna worked the idea out, as the two pictures in the National Gallery demonstrate. Into Giovanni's comes a note which was destined to be repeated often in his work—the stillness and quietness we miss in Mantegna's hotter colouring and less spacious rendering of the composition.

Some time in this early period Antonello of Messina put Venice into his artistic debt. Giovanni was no

sudden convert. He found what was good in the new man's work, and adopted just as much of it as his own needed. The method of oil painting took the place of the earlier tempera. His Madonnas, which until this had seemed experimental in their variety, assumed a type likeness which was to distinguish not only his work but that of all the Venetian school: they became at once queens and magnificent human mothers. The Venetians painting either men or women, tended to give them somewhat massive necks and athletic bodies; Bellini did this with his Madonnas, and he invested them with all the proud charm of their maternity. In the earlier altar-pieces we notice that he still has the Mantegnaësque method of making his frame the front of a pavilion within which the figures are posed; later he abandoned this, and depended for his illusion upon the sense of three dimensions which he could put into the figures themselves and their backgrounds. The wonderful *Madonna and Saints* at the Frari, Venice, shows him in his first method; that at S. Zaccaria in his second. Another step in his evolution may be noticed in the *Transfiguration* at Naples, in the change to that pastoral mood which later was to give us Giorgione among his pupils.

During the last ten years of the century Giovanni Bellini created many of the distinctive half-length Madonnas which seem to have been his invention. Venetian art, as we have seen, had long adopted the idea of the half-length figure for the upper part of anconas, and Bellini thus evolves his new type directly from the local tradition, utilising for smaller altar pictures the compositional possibilities of the form. The exquisite *Madonna of the Two Trees*, in the Venice Academy, can stand for this body of paintings; or the *Madonna*

(No. 280, National Gallery); or the *Madonna* in the Metropolitan Museum.

Next in the master's evolution comes the Pastoral. What action and reaction of temperament there was between Bellini and his great pupil Giorgione it would be impossible to say. Giorgione, in the brief years of his life, made himself master of this Arcadian art, an art owing almost as much to literature as to painting. Giovanni Bellini, while the young Giorgione was in his studio, proved himself master of it also. The *Religious Allegory* of the Uffizi is his great achievement in the vein—consecrated to religious purposes it is worthy of note. Giovanni is still essentially himself, even when he is adopting a current mode of presenting a poem in a picture. Titian, too, is among the master's pupils at this time, and we find Giovanni's colour deepening, his shadows filling with colour. Mantegna is almost forgotten; Bellini learns of his own pupils and of the time spirit. He sets his saints out of doors, re-awakening, perhaps, his own love of nature as he sees it afresh through the eyes of these two brilliant young men from the mountain and hill country. In 1505 he painted the *Doge Loredano* (National Gallery) and achieved a piece of portraiture which has never been surpassed. It was in 1506 that Dürer, visiting Venice, reports that the seventy-six-year-old artist is "the best painter in Venice," and so he remained until the end, in 1515.

All that we love in Venetian painting he had acquired during that slow evolution over three-quarters of a century. Its colour, its worldly sensuous charm; its early sweetness, its late strength, its fine landscape; its all-too-human portrayal of humanity, such as only the Florentines could equal and they lost in their search

for the grand style; these things Giovanni Bellini incorporated in his art. Through the long years of his practice the greatest men of this glorious high summer of Venetian art worked under him, so that the whole line of Venetian art comes from him.

His long activity has given fine works to almost every gallery of importance. In Venice itself, of course, at the Academy and in the churches we find him at his best; but in the National Gallery we have the most magnificent collection of his pictures outside Italy, and the art of Giovanni Bellini can well be studied there.

GENTILE BELLINI (1429–1507) The genius of Giovanni has overshadowed that of his elder brother, yet in their day it was to Gentile that the worthy Council of Venice gave the title of knight and count palatine for his services to painting, and it was Gentile who was chosen to go to the court of Sultan Mohammet when that Eastern potentate asked for the best painter in Venice. Evidently, therefore, Venice held Gentile in high regard; she only admitted that Giovanni was her greatest painter in the years after 1507 when his brother was dead.

To-day there is a tendency to revive Gentile's fame. It depends upon his influence as an objective narrative painter, especially his influence upon Carpaccio, whose finest pictures borrow from Gentile's method of using the Venetian piazzas for their settings. It is claimed that Pinturicchio and Raphael himself went to these; but for the nonce there is little need to consider this clever eldest son of old Jacopo Bellini other than in his own right as a painter.

His early work, executed probably as an assistant in his father's bottega, shows the inevitable Paduan, Mantegna-cum-Squarcione influence. It was in 1466 that he had his first big opportunity on the paintings for the School of S. Mark. These Venetian "Schools" were in fact organisations largely devoted to charity, originating often with the need to collect money to ransom Christian prisoners from the pagans during the Crusades. After the manner of fashionable charities, they tended to become wealthy, had fine buildings which they filled with art treasures, and took important part in the endless ceremonial with which Venice assured herself of her own importance. This commission to Gentile was, therefore, a mark of confidence, coming, as it did, from one of the richest of the Schools. The series upon which he worked were destroyed by fire, but their fame established Gentile as a kind of official artist to Venice.

It was in 1479 that he went to the Sultan at Constantinople. We have his *Portrait* of his Eastern patron in the National Gallery; and an exquisitely sensitive miniature of a Turkish youth in Mrs. Gardner's Collection at Boston; they reveal that Gentile was not only a narrative painter. He is said to have left the Court because the Sultan, in order to demonstrate the falling short of verisimilitude in a *Beheading of John the Baptist*, cut off the head of a slave in his presence—a study in empirical æsthetics which proved too much for the Venetian artist. However, he returned to Venice with the title of Pasha to add to his earlier honours. In 1492 he again was painting for the Schools, for S. Mark's once more, and for S. John the Evangelist. The great canvases which he executed we find in the Venice Academy, and one in the Brera at Milan. They were really his last

efforts, for the Milan canvas of *S. Mark Preaching* he left for Giovanni to finish.

In the history of Venetian painting three of these wall decorations are of high importance. The *Corpus Christi Procession in S. Mark's Square*, the *Miracle of the Reliquary* (both in the Academy, Venice) and the *S. Mark Preaching*. They began that vogue in vast canvases which we associate with Venetian work. As we have seen, they really take the place of the frescoes of other centres, because frescoes will not live in the Venetian air. They start a type of straightforward narrative from nature, by depicting typical Venetian festivals. They give us authentic views of 15th century Venice and its ceremonials, its dresses, its distinctive types. They are, in fact, faithful records, with very little subjectivity in them, but much honest observation. They are prose, but sound prose. Here, then, Gentile started a school of narrative painting different entirely from the Sienese subjective school, different from the Giottoësque which had led to the Florentine, allied more to Flemish painting of the period in its depiction of local crowd life. In his portraits, too, Gentile points the Venetian direction by emphasising hands and faces against dark, rich backgrounds. Look at his *Mathematician* in the National Gallery: all that we wish to know about the man is said with the face, the hand demonstrating some thesis, and the other hand and compasses in half-tones. When that portrait had been painted the course of Venetian portraiture was set.

Gentile stands worthily, therefore, with his more brilliant brother at the beginning of Venetian painting. He, too, took some ideas and methods from Padua, some from Sicilian Antonello, but he brought a very Venetian mind to bear upon them, and, linking them to

the work of his father as we know it from the sketch-book, he held the scales well between tradition and reform.

CARPACCIO (1450–1522) This narrative painting which we have seen Gentile so happily inaugurate reaches its finest expression in his pupil Carpaccio. It is said that he studied first with Basaiti, one of the Murano painters, but in the story of art he is entirely Gentile's scholar. It has been said, too, that he worked under Giovanni Bellini, and when we look at his masterly altar-piece of *The Presentation*, in the Venice Academy, we find that here he is as good as his teacher, for it has all the monumental power, with a sweetness and grace in the music-playing child-angel on the steps in the foreground, which Giovanni himself could not have surpassed. But it is not even such work as this altar-piece which gives Carpaccio his enduring fame. We think of him primarily as the artist of the S. Ursula stories, to which a room in the Venice Academy is devoted. These nine canvases, executed between 1492 and 1495 for the School of S. Ursula, are the highest performance in narration in art. As critics* have recently shown, Pinturicchio and Raphael probably saw them before they worked on the frescoes for the Library at Siena, and all later Venetian story-telling artists were cognisant of them.

To Carpaccio his picture is always a decoration. He saw the value of the long perspective lines of the Venetian piazzas, the background of buildings, the intersecting waters; he saw the decorative possibilities of the exquisite costumes and festivals of his city. All this he wove into these canvases, and over all he cast a shimmer of golden light, showed us the clouds reflected in light

* Paul Konody and R. H. Wilenski in *Italian Painting*.

and shade in the lagoons, and proved himself in every way a fine painter alike of scene and of men and women in epic action.

He never exceeded his performance with the S. Ursula paintings. In 1502 he did a series upon S. George and S. Jerome for the School of S. George. In one respect they are more interesting than the Ursula series, in that they are still to be seen in their original setting. There is no loss of the gentle fancifulness of the Ursula pictures; and, good romancer that he is, he gets every ounce out of his stories. In a later series of Old Testament stories for the School of the Albanians Carpaccio does fall short of his own standards; and we must turn to the lovely altar-piece which we have mentioned, executed in 1510, and much under the influence of Giovanni Bellini, to see his brilliant recovery in another direction.

The National Gallery does not show Carpaccio at his best save in one S. Ursula study, which is indeed in his happiest mood. Land and water, buildings and loitering crowds, the trees and flowers, the bird which seems always to appear somewhere in his work, and the foreground group of the main actors bespeak this best of story-tellers. The Metropolitan Museum possesses an extraordinary study of *Hermits Meditating on the Passion*. It shows Carpaccio in a new vein of mystic-religion and must be studied with his other pictures.

If Carpaccio carried to a successful issue the narrative painting of prose it was for another Venetian to invent, and in a few short years to perfect, that of poetry. Giovanni Bellini's brilliant pupil, Giorgione, was the newcomer to whom Venetian painting owed so much.

GIORGIONE (1478–1510) Born away towards the Alps at Castelfranco, he brought strange gifts to this art of painting. He was in person handsome, a musician, a great lover: one of those dreamers who seem always to co-exist challengingly in active materialistic communities, but a dreamer capable of expressing his thoughts of dream in the art he had chosen. These men seem to come into being as the last refinement of luxury, as though the wealth of marble palaces, the exquisite villas and gardens, the easy pleasure-filled life created them. Giorgione took his fill of that leisured life, and he brought to it the expression of its own mood of languor and dalliance. That was his art.

We cannot tell now exactly how many pictures are really from his hand. He created a vogue, and others —either pupils or imitators—profited by it. Giorgione himself probably painted but little, for he died at thirty-two, infected by plague from the woman he loved, if report be true. Yet the few pictures we have make him outstandingly a great artist. Their subject matter, their manner, their very purpose were new things in art.

Before all else Giorgione paints the subjective rather than the objective. It is the Arcadian mood which we get from his pictures: the pensiveness, the ideality. Whatever his subject and whatever the disposal of his figures, we see them as people in some dream-world, more still and lovely than this of the senses. There is practically no sense of action. He creates Arcadia, and life is so pleasant in it that the figures pause and hold the precious moment in hand. They are detached; they have little real concern for each other. Take the

Soldier and Gipsy, the famous Tempest picture in the Giovanelli Palace at Venice; or the *Three Philosophers* at Vienna: the actors seem to stand each remote in their own world of thought. Even the great altar-piece at Castelfranco, one of the earliest works of Giorgione, based on the monumental structure of Giovanni Bellini before Giorgione had found his own style—even this sets its four figures in complete detachment, each from each.

With this subjectivism, this painting of mood rather than act, Giorgione gives us also a marvellous landscape. None before him in Venetian art had painted trees, but he paints them observantly as he paints the skies, the distant mountains, every item of the rural scene. The idylls have always their appropriate setting; his nature and his humanity belong to the summer solstice, pausing, as it were, at the crest of fulfilment.

His technical mastery of his medium is again his own. He builds his pictures in bold masses and floods the deep shadows with rich colour; there is practically no line, and after 1505 the sheer splendour of the colour is the perfect expression of this art of climax. It has been asserted that he learned of Leonardo that richness of shadow colour, but it seems rather a logical development of his own ripe art. It has been called "the Venetian fire," and for nearly a century it made Venetian painting glorious.

Again, it is interesting that Giorgione, painting these pictures almost as other men created poems or music to express a mood, was the first whole-hearted easel painter. His pictures were intimate; they were made to be moved from place to place; their life was contained within the frame, and they need bear no relation-

ship to the building. To-day we are in reaction against this self-containedness of painting, and incline to ask that it should return to architecture to curb its license; but in Giorgione's day it gave art a novel freedom. His work came nearer to art for art's sake than any before. It approached the abstract arts of music and literature in its expressiveness; it existed only as between the creative artist and the work of art itself. If some other mind can take its meaning, well and good; but there seems no motive outside the creation. Not to make men worship nor to tell a story; not to point a moral nor edify the onlooker; not to enrich a building; but to put down the mood of a young man's mind which might by chance please another mind attuned to it: that is the art of Giorgione. That mood was usually one of pleasure, with just the touch of pensiveness which pleasure always carries to thoughtful natures. We meet it again two hundred years later in Watteau, and its pale reflection is upon much of the art of our time which seeks to create an illusion of an idyllic world for the gratification of the rich.

Of authentic Giorgione work we have little enough. The pictures we have mentioned—the *Tempest* at Venice; the *Castelfranco altar-piece;* the *Three Philosophers* at Vienna—with a *Portrait* at Berlin, the *San Liberale* in the National Gallery, the figure of the *Sleeping Venus* at Dresden: the list is short before we move into doubtful categories. Titian was caught up into Giorgione's lyric mood, and now even the famous *Concert* of the Pitti Palace may be his, and the *Fête Champêtre* of the Louvre. But these and much else, by whomsoever they were painted, belong in spirit to the genius of Giorgione, who first made lyrics in

paint and brought the atmosphere of Arcadia to our common earth.

Among those whom Giorgione influenced greatly was one more significant than himself even: his fellow-student under Giovanni Bellini—Titian. But Titian is so vast, his work covers so many phases, that it constitutes in itself the epitome of Venetian painting, and we must needs consider lesser men before we turn to it. Among these, yet foremost of those who adopted the Giorgionesque manner stands Palma Vecchio.

PALMA VECCHIO (1480–1528) Like Giorgione himself, Jacopo Palma was born at the foot of the mountains, his native place being Serinalta, which one sees as the background of his *Adoration*, in the Louvre. Early in the new century we find him in Bellini's studio, and to be in that studio at that time was to be under the influence of Giorgione and, to a secondary degree, that of Titian. So it proved with Palma. He had their tricks and mannerisms; he had not their genius. He can imitate Titian's placing of fine figures in relationship to fine scenery; he can reproduce the patrician Christ at supper with his patrician friends in the Uffizi *Supper at Emmaus*, which recalls Titian's treatment of the subject in the Louvre; he can get those almost over-refined portraits emerging from their warm shadows after the manner either of Titian or Giorgione. Yet we feel that he continually overstates, and loses alike the lyric quality of Giorgione and the grandeur of Titian in mere theatricalism. In the portraits he is at his best, and his *Poet*, in the National Gallery, long passed for a Titian. His women,

broad-bosomed Venetian beauties, in the yellow-ochre draperies which are the sign manual of Palma's work, are particularly operatic and lacking in the subtlety of appeal with which his two greater contemporaries invested their women. Nevertheless, Palma's masterpiece is one of these women: the very unsaintlike *S. Barbara*, at S. Maria Formosa, Venice. In her ample and glorious robes she stands posed and crowned like an amazon queen. Composition, colour, subject matter —it is all a little obvious as Palma Vecchio invariably is. By the time he painted the *Flora* (National Gallery) these elements had destroyed him; yet, as with all other Venetian painting other than that of Giorgione, these pictures have robustness and composure, qualities born of an accepting mind in a prosperous society.

Of Palma's pupils, CARIANI (*c.*1480–1541), a Bergamese painter, whose work we shall find in the National Gallery, and BONIFAZIO (1490–1540) from Verona, are outstanding. In their work the tendencies we have noticed in Palma's own are carried one step further; no fresh inspiration comes; and art loses itself in mere workmanship.

Two of the artists of the Giovanni Bellini studio, in their separate ways, emancipated themselves from the powerful influences there, and so stand aside from the direct line of Venetian painting: Lorenzo Lotto because his temperament had little in common with the city's gaiety and opulence; Sebastian del Piombo because opportunity brought him into contact with the masters who were then at work in Rome, with Michel Angelo and Raphael. One turns first to Lorenzo Lotto for he, despite the cast of his mind, owed much technically to the all-powerful spirit of Giorgione.

LORENZO LOTTO (1480–1556) One of the most sensitive portraits in the National Gallery is that of the *Protonotary Apostolic Giuliano*, and it comes from Lotto's brush. He does not seem ever to have belonged to the hedonistic fashionable life of the city; and when, after his apprenticeship, first with Alvise Vivarini and then with Bellini, he became a master-painter on his own account, it was not in Venice that he chose to work but in the little towns and cities of the Marches. He was a deeply religious man, it is reported, given to meditation, and making friends with the brothers in the monasteries and with simple peasant folk. We have his own portrait in the *Family Group* at the National Gallery, and some queer hint of himself in the brooding, bearded men whom he painted. His art reflects none of the self-conscious assurance, almost flamboyance, which we associate with the Venetian school; it is always pensive, hesitant and supremely sensitive. So we return to that most attractive portrait of the Protonotary, or to the *Three Ages of Man*, at the Pitti Palace, for our true Lotto; for they are more revealing of him than the altar-pieces by which he is often known, the *Enthroned Madonna*, at Bergama, or that *S. Antoninus* in the transept of S. Paolo at Venice.

Neither his pupil, PREVITALI (1480–1528), whose *Marriage of S. Catherine* we find in the National Gallery, nor his fellow-townsman, BISSOLO (1464–1528), are artists of great consequence. Lotto stands alone in this unexpected sensibility, a little like Giorgione's own, but inspired by a mode of thought so entirely different from his.

SEBASTIAN DEL PIOMBO (1485–1547) was as emphatically of his world as this other was apart from it. It becomes doubtful whether we should speak of him as a Venetian at all, although he was born in Venice, and studied there. Had this Sebastian Luciani been a great man he should have achieved much, for no artist had better opportunities. In Venice he worked with Bellini and with Giorgione; in 1512 he was offered an appointment in Rome by Chigi, the Papal banker, and he became Keeper of the Leaden Seal (hence his appellation "del Piombo"); then, whilst this powerful painter secured him commissions, Michel Angelo himself, seeing in the young Venetian a potentially successful rival to Raphael, helped him with design out of jealousy of the Umbrian. Thus this Sebastian might have united the glory of Venetian colouring to the design of the grandest school of Florence and Rome as Michel Angelo dreamed; but opportunity is not enough, and he did not have such greatness in him. His vast *Raising of Lazarus*, in the National Gallery, painted with Michel Angelo's assistance in rivalry to Raphael's *Transfiguration*, succeeds not at all. We find Michel Angelo's designs for the figure of Lazarus in the British Museum, and Piombo reports to him from Rome to Florence how the conspiracy succeeds. But, perhaps because jealousy is too distracting a motive for art, Piombo is not even at his own best in this picture, which has had many vicissitudes in critical opinion. In a later work in the Gallery, the *Holy Family*, he shows more feelingly the largeness of Michel Angelo's influence. We have it again in the Louvre *Visitation*, where the draperies especially reveal his master. In the National

Gallery, however, we can study this artist in his many moods and periods. There is a *Dead Christ*, frankly Mantegna-Bellini in method; the *Daughter of Herodias*, confessing Giorgione; this *Raising of Lazarus*, of his earlier Roman period, and the *Holy Family*, of his maturity.

Out-topping all these painters, however, standing above all Venetian painters and among the foremost painters of the world, is Tiziano Vecelli. Ruskin has spoken of the "strange undercurrent of everlasting murmur about his name," and the "deep consent of all great men that he is greater than they"; and in the period of more than three-quarters of a century during which he practised his art he merited this high praise.

TITIAN (1477–1575)

Titian was born at Cadore, in the Dolomite country, and the character of the mountain people, the grandeur of that mountain home, are factors both in his life and art. The date of his birth, according to his own account, was 1477, and, despite much argument about it, there seems little real reason to doubt that this is correct. A mere child, he was sent up to Venice to study under a mosaic worker, thence he went to the bottega of Gentile Bellini, and from there to Giovanni's. So strong was the interaction between him and his fellow-student, Giorgione, that much of their work of this period might be by either. Titian, on the whole, uses more line than the other, but he shares his warm, deep shadows, and much of his poetry. This Giorgionesque marks Titian's first style. It lasts for five or six years after the death of Giorgione. It gave us some of the best of the portraits—the "*Ariosto*" (National Gallery), the *Man with a Glove* (Louvre); it gave us the *Tribute*

Money of Dresden as a religious picture, and such poesies as the *Sacred and Profane Love* (Borghese, Rome). In any of these pictures we can see Giorgione, although doubtless Titian gave back to him much of his own power. Meantime he proves himself a master of landscape, painting in the background of Giorgione's *Sleeping Venus* (Dresden) and never missing an opportunity in portrait or sacred subject of opening a view out on to such country as he himself had been brought up in.

As the influence of Giorgione fades; as, one surmises, Titian himself becomes more a man of the world, more positive elements come into his painting. The early romantic mood is still there, but it sheds its wistfulness and its inaction in mood, as it sheds its mystery in colour and design. The period may be said to begin with the *Flora* (Pitti) and with the *Assumption altar-piece* at the Frari, Venice. Titian had evidently decided to abandon dreams for an active and successful life. We find him at this time, even whilst he is painting the *Assumption*, wire-pulling to obtain the sinecure of Commissioner of the Salt Taxes, and henceforth the calculating man of affairs walks alongside the artist. This developing mentality, as we would expect, reflects itself in his work by an accession of energy, an obviousness, a certain surface sureness in line and colour and in design. He has abandoned the flutes and lutes of Giorgione for strident brass. Power is in every line and every conception. The *Flora* catches and presents in fullest blossom, as it were, the beauty of woman; the *Assumption* is a pæan of triumph. He achieved a brilliant surface and immediate appeal which had been the goal of all Venetian painting. Paolo Veronese and Tintoretto were to follow along the avenue he opened, but

none surpassed him in this. His people are all patricians. Even when Giorgione's poetry had held him back they had been that, his Jesus in *The Tribute Money*, for example, being a gentle young aristocrat; now they became the consciously dominant type—lordly men and women of voluptuous build, actively pursuing great affairs.

To this second period, the high summer of Titian's art, belong such works as the *Pesaro Madonna* which we find in the Frari. Its vast columns, its high-throned Madonna, its gorgeous stuffs of silk and velvet, the gleaming armour and the great flag bespeak Titian's triumphant mood. Christianity, to these successful Venetians, had very little humility about it, despite Ruskin's moralisings on this very picture. To this period belong also the mythological subjects executed for the Este family at Ferrara, of which the *Bacchus and Ariadne*, in the National Gallery, is one and the *Worship of Venus*, at Madrid, another. Here is the Titian ideal of the period: energy of splendidly conceived types in an ideal landscape. The pensive mood of Giorgione has no part in this rout of vigorous life. It was painted about 1523 in the midst of the period of greatest strength. About the same date we had the *Entombment*, of the Louvre, a design equally powerful, equally given over to magnificent types in virile action, despite its subject. Titian sets his action against one of those fine skies with which he always carried the mood of his picture straight to the heart of nature, as though man were so supremely lord of the universe that the heavens and earth were subject to his feelings.

For fully twenty years, until about 1536, this second period lasted. Then, as though the artist had expressed

his own sense of power enough, the emphatic personal note is withdrawn from his painting. He becomes objective, creating still with unfailing mastery of technique, and indeed losing something in personality just because his mastery enables him to command his medium so well. Honours and great patronage were thrust upon him, or, it must be confessed, sometimes schemed for. In 1533 the Emperor Charles V. had called him to Augsburg, and henceforth he worked a great deal for the Emperor, head of the powerful House of Hapsburg, and for his son, Philip of Spain. He kept great house in Venice, entertained like a prince, conducted the business side of his art transactions with ruthless acumen, and revealed himself the product of successful 16th century Venice.

The *Venus*, now in the Pitti, belongs to this time. We inevitably compare it with Giorgione's, and find that it lacks poetry in spirit, but is supreme in technical achievement. The *Presentation*, particularly interesting because we can see it in the setting for which it was designed in what is now the Academy at Venice, belongs to this section of his work also. The *Supper at Emmaus* (Louvre) shows where his avowedly religious art had arrived. Proud and patrician it is: the discreet servants in the background, the well-bred, finely-robed disciples, the aristocratic Master; and beyond, the noble column hinting magnificent architecture, and the sweep of romantic country which is a fitting setting for these noble people. Titian was a lord of the earth and of the brush, and in everything he does he proclaims it. But the earlier thrill of such mastery is wanting.

So he might have gone on until the end, but that in 1545 he made a journey to Rome which, on his own

confession, made a great difference to his art. He was seventy when he went; he talks of being "greatly improved" after, and for nearly thirty years we see him in this truly marvellous final period. It is, as so often happens with an artist, a loosening of technique. The colour is flicked on to the canvas more brokenly than hitherto making harmonies of rich browns and greys from which the forms emerge rather by juxtaposition of tones than by colour masses. His design grows more rugged, his chiaroscuro is more definitely part of his picture, his colour is more subtle in its harmonies. His mood becomes at once tragic and titanic. During these last years he worked chiefly for the Hapsburgs, so that we find much of his best work at Madrid and at Vienna. The *Education of Cupid* (Borghese, Rome), the *Pietà* of the Venice Academy, or the *Venus and Adonis* in the National Gallery, will serve to show us Titian in this final phase. It belongs rather to the modern Impressionists than to Renaissance Italy, and it is obviously the work of a master who can use his brush with such surety that he can transcend the laws. That power which he had always possessed of putting down a general impression of form and colour, emphasising details only at the point of interest—a power which has become the first tenet of modern painting—reached its climax in these last years. Even near its beginning he could achieve the *Stormy Landscape*, now at Buckingham Palace, one of the truly great landscapes of the world; and there lies over everything he did the sense of unchallengeable mastery.

In 1576 Titian died. His life had covered that of many lesser men, and almost spanned the gamut of Venetian art. Everywhere in Italy now the impetus of the Renaissance was dying away, and even in Venice

only two artists of real importance remained to carry that impetus on for a few more years.

PAOLO VERONESE (1528–1588) During the middle period of Titian's own art there came to Venice from near-by Verona, a twenty-seven-year-old painter, whose facile mind and unabashed worldliness gave him a complete mastery over the realm of surfaces objectively seen with which at that time Titian himself was preoccupied. It was Paolo Cagliari, destined to be known as Paolo Veronese, and the greatest pure decorator in the history of painting. He had served his apprenticeship under obscure masters in his native town; he owes practically nothing to anybody, but everything to his own urbane capacity for observing and painting. He was uninspired, had no passion, none of the scholarship of Tintoretto, nor the insight of Titian; yet in his own way he is unrivalled.

To Veronese the spectacle of the fulsome Venetian life was enough. Its opulence caught what imagination he had, and for the whole period of his active life he recorded its wealthy society. The pageants and feasts especially were in his vein. The people, dressed exquisitely in brocades and velvets, furred and jewelled; the splendour of buildings, of marble pilaster and balustrade against the sunlit sky. Paolo flooded his pictures with light as the right setting for this gracious life which he depicted. There are no heavy shadows in his work, but everything is carried out in luminosity, deepening only to broken shadows of grey or blue. The result gives his pictures a unity which fits them admirably for their task of wall decoration.

He is at his happiest when he paints a banquet, and perhaps his finest picture is the *Marriage of Cana* in

the Louvre. It is interesting to notice how this subject, or that of Jesus feasting with the Pharisee, came, in Venice, to take the place of the Last Supper as the theme for refectory paintings: the Venetians had little use for the defeated Christ, and they saw no reason why they should be depressed. So Paolo Veronese found his reflection of their life in this best of all possible worlds entirely to their taste. The Schools, the Ducal Palace, the Churches, provided him with commissions, and he executed them with his amazing ability. Once his obvious lack of religious feeling and the inclusion of some heretical details brought him up against the Inquisition, but Paolo painted out the offending passage and continued his triumphant career.

The famous banquet pictures: the *Cana*, of the Louvre; the *Supper in the House of the Pharisees*, in the Brera, Milan; the *Feast in the House of Levi*, at the Venice Academy, stand to the forefront of his pictures. His church work is most comprehensively studied in the Church of S. Sebastian at Venice, which contains a number of his works, and the Doge's Palace has much of his mural decoration. The National Gallery has one of his very finest and most typical pictures in the *Family of Darius;* there, too, is to be found the characteristic *Adoration*, and four interesting decorative pieces which reveal his power along these lines. With his death, in 1488, Venetian painting would really have been at an end but for the final glory of the man whose canvases had challenged his throughout their careers: Tintoretto.

It was characteristic of the Venice of this opulent 16th century that she should have at one period three such masters as Titian, Paolo Veronese, and Tintoretto working for her. The greatness of Titian tends to

overshadow the others, yet their respective productions are little short of marvellous.

TINTORETTO (1518–1594) Jacopo Robusti—whom they called Tintoretto, the dyer's son—claims an important place in the records of art. It was not for nothing that he wrote on the walls of his studio his ideal: "The Drawing of Michel Angelo and the Colour of Titian"; even though Titian, either in jealousy or annoyance at Tintoretto's exuberant lack of finish, had turned the seventeen-year-old lad out of his studio. But Tintoretto had a passion for art which would not be denied, and an energy in producing it which none has ever equalled. Piombo remarked despairingly that he could produce as much in two days as another in two years, and Tintoretto's specific quality depends largely upon that vitality. It got into his brush strokes as it did into Rubens'; it gives all his work a dash and vigour more typical of inspired sketches; it invests his conceptions with a liveliness which makes them dramatic and passionate. There is something Shakespearean about Tintoretto's painting.

One other element enters into it which we must needs consider. Tintoretto was essentially a religious man, not in the "best people" manner of Titian, but from deep, intellectual conviction. His paintings, therefore, recommence religious painting—not now the old narrative which would tell a story as to children; nor the icon painting which would raise images for worship; but something gripping, emotional, "purging by pity and terror." He was probably influenced by the Jesuit Order which, founded in 1537, was making great strides with its understanding of psychology and its calculated policy of pressing all factors into the service of

proselytising. That would have appealed to a religious scholar such as Tintoretto, and he consecrated his other passion for art to it. The result is the presentation of the stories of the Gospel and of the saints in gripping, dramatic terms.

We see it in the remarkable *Miracle of the Slave* (Academy, Venice), painted in 1548; in the great series which he executed over a period of twenty-eight years for the School of S. Roch; in the *Paradise* of the Ducal Palace, or the *Calvary* of S. Cassiano. The method does not prevent Tintoretto from making his men and women in these compositions the finest specimens of Venetian strength and voluptuous beauty arrayed in exquisite draperies. We remark it in the *Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes*, of the Metropolitan Museum, which for Tintoretto takes place before a crowd of exquisitely dressed Venetians. But it is to miss the import of the artist to think of him as being merely a painter concerned with decoration. Tintoretto is a teacher too.

Alongside his religious concern he was, nevertheless, a great humanist, and all the learning and mythological significance of the time appealed to him. His mythological paintings are more frankly decorations, conceived in brighter tones, with less of the dramatic blacks and greys which conveyed the significance of Christian teaching. We meet them at their best in the Ducal Palace, but the National Gallery's exquisite possession, the *Origin of the Milky Way*, shows him at his best in this vein, as the *Vincenzo Morosini*, one of the greatest portraits in the world, exhibits his highest note in that branch.

Like Titian, he lived until he was very old. The *Paradise* was probably his last painting. It was in truth

the last painting in this proud line of Venetian art, which for a hundred and fifty years had burned in glorious colour on the walls of her palaces and churches —a great ending to it, as Michel Angelo's *Last Judgment* on the walls of the Sistine was a great ending to the work of the Florentines.

EPILOGUE AT BOLOGNA AND NAPLES

This story of Italian painting rounds itself off with two diverse tendencies. One, having its source at Bologna, was an attempt to gather all the threads of the Renaissance and to perfect an eclectic art from the best of them; the other, coming into being at Rome and blossoming at Naples, was a revolt against the idealism of the Renaissance in the name of naturalism. Both owed something to the rise of the Jesuit Order, which, as we have seen presaged in the painting of Tintoretto, pressed art into the service of the Church moving men's minds to pity, terror and ecstasy by making the stories of the Gospel and the saintly legends most human by depicting essentially human figures. For art it was a dangerous course. It led to a naturalism destined to destroy the grand manner and all idealism; to replace them by sentimentality and the flamboyance of Baroque art, or to abandon them for genre pictures of low life and highly individualised types.

The first tendency came into being at Bologna. It commenced when Denis Calveart in 1575, coming from the Netherlands, founded an academy there, which he hoped would gather into its teaching all the art elements of the Renaissance across Europe. Ten years later a rival school was established by the Carracci brothers, and this had also the Eclectic ideal. All the influences —Venetian colour, Michel Angelo's power over form, Raphael's sublimity, Correggio's mastery of perspective,

Leonardo's subtlety—were to be united in art. The academy as such was an enormous success. The pupils from the earlier one came over to it; the three brothers were capable and popular teachers. For the first time in a school, drawing from the nude was established.

The result of the theory was the undisciplined extravagance of Baroque art. We see it in the decoration of the Farnese Palace at Rome, executed by Agostino Carracci (1557–1602) and his brother Annibale Carracci (1560–1609). They had already done many of those altar-pieces with flamboyant draped figures in swirling restless lines with which we associate their name, and which we meet in the churches in and around Bologna. The Farnese in their hands was treated as Michel Angelo had treated the ceiling of the Sistine; but its passionate mythological subjects, its forced chiaroscuro and heightened colour, made it a parody of that noble work. It can stand for us all for the ambition, the accomplishment and the lack of judgment of the new art. In Rome these Carracci brothers came up against that other vein of naturalistic painting wherewith Caravaggio had caught the ear of the town, and under that influence they added to their earlier veins of sentimental altar painting and this baroque decoration a line of genre naturalism, showing subjects of low life in forced artificial chiaroscuro. Eclecticism was their faith.

From their school came such figures as Guido Reni (1575–1642). He, too, followed this triple line. His religious pictures, calculated in the philosophy of the newly-arrived Jesuit propaganda to touch the hearts of worshippers and to excite their nerves, we meet everywhere. At the Rospigliosi Palace in Rome he did that *tour de force* of architectural perspective painting,

the *Aurora*. Under the influence of Caravaggio he became a violent realist. His fellow-scholar, DOMENICHINO (1581–1641) was a more earnest type, and in days when the time spirit was more with him might have been a fine artist. His *Diana and Nymphs*, at the Borghese, is probably his best known picture; and in his *Communion of S. Jerome*, at the Vatican, we have the high note of Baroque religious art. A score of lesser masters affected these mannerisms as they pursued their studies at Bologna or practised them at Rome, but meanwhile in Rome itself and at Naples arose that school of forced naturalism pitted against the Renaissance ideality. Its master in Rome was CARAVAGGIO, as they called Michelangelo Amerighi, after the Lombard village where he was born in 1569. He raised the banner of democracy in painting. He took his types from the streets; and, by a system of romantic naturalism, achieved largely by forcing the shadows with violent top-lighting, he made a new style. In the taverns and the studios they made a war-cry, "Truth and Caravaggio," and forced it with fist and sword in the violent manner of their day. In its own style the work was effective. He carried it to Naples and to the Spanish-Italian school of art there; and there was at last practically no corner of Europe where this method did not have its strong influence. The types from low-life owed their interest rather to the depiction of accidental fallings-away from ideal humanity than from adherence to it. Part of the new doctrine was the faithful rendering of the individual model. So across this last phase of Italian art, gamblers and drinkers, eaters and brawlers took the place of the saints and heroes. Their terrible reality rather than their ideality became its justification; and, under the theatrical lighting and forced modelling of the new

masters, they took on a glory of their own. It was at Naples, in the Spanish colony there, that this violent art found its adherents. The artists themselves were almost incredibly violent creatures. They stabbed, poisoned or drowned their rivals; they could destroy a rival picture with corrosive acid; and carry on such systematic terrorism against a newcomer that death or flight was inevitable. Domenichino was one of their victims when he went there. This Spanish colony became the focus of the "Tenebrist" art, as it was called from its deep shadows. Caravaggio, as the master of the method, was able to stay in this town dominated artistically by the frankly villainous JOSE RIBERA (1589–1652) and his pupil, SALVATOR ROSA (1615–1673). Caravaggio himself stands for us in such work as the dramatic *Death of the Virgin* (Louvre), in the *Card Players* (Dresden) or the *Christ at Emmaus* (National Gallery). His work has everywhere dramatic naturalism and a force of personality which modifies our wonder at its enormous influence in subsequent European art. Ribera gives us the same qualities with a little more emphasis of violence. His *Entombment* (Louvre) is a typical work. It is great naturalism: terrible, pitiful, but with no true grandeur. Salvator Rosa introduced a new phase, and an important one for the evolution of art, by carrying this passionate human interest into one for nature. He made dramatic romantic landscapes of wild country as the settings for scenes of violence, and we learn from his letters that he was earnestly drawn to such scenery.

Thus in the theatricality of the Baroque painters and decorators and in the gloomy brutality of these Tenebrists, the Italian Renaissance perished. Elsewhere in Europe —in Spain where this Jesuit art blossomed anew, in

Holland where the great realists of the 17th century took the genre tendency and made a century of glory; later in France when classicism was reborn, there were to be echoes. But for Italy the story of the Renaissance was finished, and its art was a part of her glorious past.

APPENDIX

i. History and Italian Art 13th to 16th centuries.

ii. Chart of the Italian Artists from the 13th to the 16th centuries.

General	*Florence*
1210 Franciscan Order founded	
1215 Dominican Order founded	
1226 Death of S. Francis	
1228 S. Francis canonised	
1228–53 Lower church at Assisi built and decorated (Artists from Florence, Siena, Rome and elsewhere met at Assisi)	
1265	Dante born
1278	S. Maria Novella commenced
1294	S. Croce commenced
1296	Florence Cathedral commenced
1300	Strife of Black *v.* White Guelphs
1302	Dante banished
1304 Petrarch born in Provence	
1305 Papal seat moved to Avignon. (Martini and possibly Giotto visited Avignon, which, by the removal of the papacy, became a great cultural centre of Western Europe, whilst Rome decayed)	
1313	Boccaccio born
1321	Death of Dante at Ravenna
1337	Or S. Michele made a church
1348 Black Death ravaged Italy	
1377 Papal seat returns to Rome (The anti-Popes still reigned at Avignon, but Rome slowly asserted itself as the centre of European Christendom)	Medici rise to power (The Medici not only endowed Florence with numerous churches, palaces and art treasures, but were the patrons of the artists for centuries)
1398 Huss preaching at Prague	
1406 During the first forty years of the century the invention and establishment of printing in Holland and Germany	Competition for the Baptistery Gates
1423	S. Lorenzo commenced
1429	Cosimo de Medici takes government
1433	Cosimo de Medici exiled
1434	Cosimo de Medici recalled
1437	Monastery of S. Marco commenced. (Fra Angelico decorated its walls)
1447	Death of Cosimo.
1464	Lorenzo the Magnificent reigns
1469–92	

Rome. Venice. The Cities of the North

1201 The Fourth Crusade
-04 VENICE was the departure point of this Crusade. By her diplomacy Venice turned this Crusade against her great trade rival Constantinople, and founded her own greatness upon the defeat of that city
1229 SIENA Cathedral commenced
1200 Popes Innocent III, Honorius II, Gregory IX and Innocent IV
-50 struggled for power with Frederick II of Sicily during the first half of the century
1272 Marco Polo went to China from VENICE

1298 SIENA: Palazzo Pubblico commenced

1305 Pope Clement V leaves Rome

1377 Pope Gregory IX returns to Rome

1405 VENICE extended her power to the West by the conquest of Padua and Verona. (This reacted upon her by bringing Renaissance art to what had hitherto been almost a Byzantine city)

1447 ROME. Pope Nicolas V commenced S. Peter's. It was this Pope who called Fra Angelico to decorate the Vatican Chapel of S. Nicolas

General	*Florence*
1471	
1477 Caxton printing at Westminster	Savonarola arrived in Florence
1482	Savonarola begins preaching
1492 Columbus discovered America	Death of Lorenzo. Piero succeeds him
1494	Medici expelled. Florence becomes a republic
1495 Albrecht Dürer in Italy	
1497	The burning of vanities. (The whole Florentine world took sides in the Revivalist campaign of the Dominican monk Savonarola. Many of the artists burned their secular paintings. Fra Bartolommeo and Botticelli were conspicuously affected by this partisanship)
1498	Trial and martyrdom of Savonarola
1500 Henry VIII King of England	
1503	
1505–6 Dürer again in Italy	
1512	Medici recalled
1513	
1519–22 World first circumnavigated	
1527 Charles V of the House of Hapsburg comes to power in Europe	Medici again expelled
1529	Siege of Florence. (Michel Angelo fortified the city)
1530	Alessandro de Medici made Duke
1537	Alessandro murdered
1537	Cosimo became Grand Duke and founded the junior branch of the Medici, which governed for 160 years until 1674, reigning in the Pitti Palace and founding the Uffizi collection
1538 S. Ignatius founded the Society of Jesus. The Jesuit teaching planned as a counterblast to the heresies of the Reformation profoundly influenced religious art	
1564 Shakespeare born in England	

ROME. Venice. The Cities of the North.

1471 ROME. Sixtus IV, the Pope of the Sistine Chapel, becomes Pope

1491 MILAN. Marriage of Lodovico Sforza with Beatrice d'Este. Lodovico became Leonardo's patron
1494 MILAN. Lodovico proclaimed Duke

1497 Alexandra VI (Borgia) becomes Pope. He called Pinturicchio to decorate his apartments

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1500 MILAN captured by the French. Fall of Lodovico

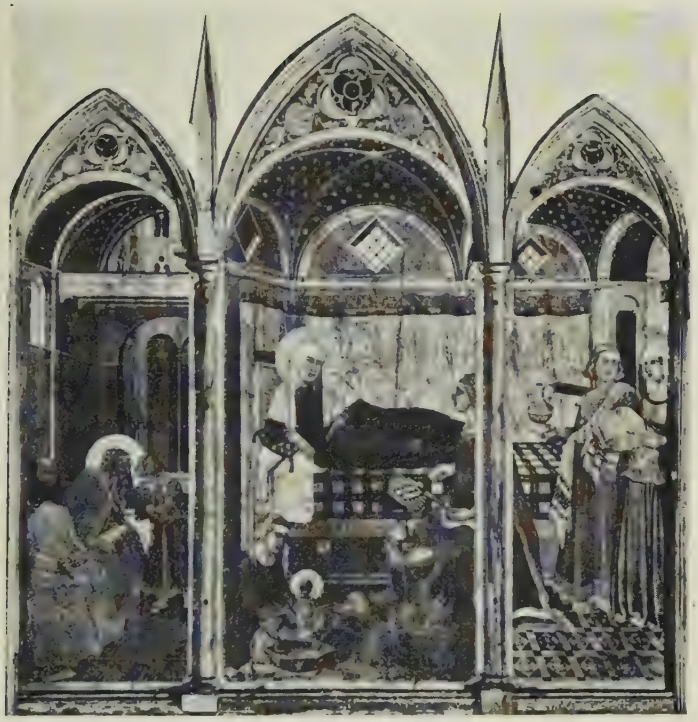
1503 ROME. Julius II becomes Pope. Called Raphael and Michel Angelo to the decoration of the Vatican
1511 ROME visited by Martin Luther
1513. ROME. Leo X becomes Pope. During the reigns of Julius II and Leo X (until 1522) the artistic and cultural centre of Italy was at Rome, Florence being in eclipse.
1527 ROME sacked by the mercenaries of Charles V.

1532 ROME. Pope Clement VII called Michel Angelo to paint the Last Judgment
1535 MILAN became Spanish under Philip

1564 VENICE. Death of Titian.
1574 VENICE. Doge's Palace burned.

Duccio] The Virgin Enthroned [*Siena Academy*

PLATE NO. I



Pietro Lorenzetti] [*Cathedra Museum, Siena*

Nativity of the Virgin

Simone Martini] Christ, the Virgin and S. Mark *[Mansum, Pisa*

PLATE NO. III

Spinelli Aretino] Heads of Apostles [*National Gallery*

Fra Angelico] Christ in Glory [*National Gallery*

PLATE NO. VI

Masaccio] [*National Gallery*

Madonna Enthroned

PLATE No. VII

Uccello] Battle of San Romano [*National Gallery*

PLATE NO. VIII

Filippo Lippi] Annunciation [*National Gallery*

PLATE NO. IX

Piero della Francesca] [*Uffizi, Florence*

Frederick of Montefeltro

Pollaiuolo] [*National Gallery*

Martyrdom of S. Sebastian

PLATE NO. XI

Benozzo Gozzoli] [*National Gallery*

Madonna

Ghirlandajo] [*National Gallery*

Procession to Calvary

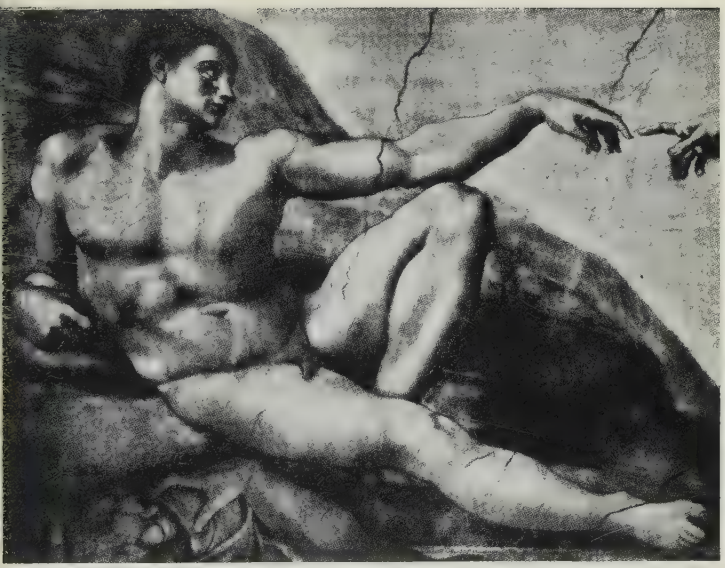
Botticelli] [*National Gallery*

Madonna with Angels

Botticelli] [*Raccolta Pavilion, Rome*

The Outcast

Signorelli] The Flagellation [*Brera, Milan*



Michel Angelo] [*Sistine Chapel, Rome*

The Creation of Adam

Andrea del Sarto] [*National Gallery*

Portrait of a Sculptor

Perugino] Portrait of Raphael

Raphael] The Sistine Madonna [*Dresden*

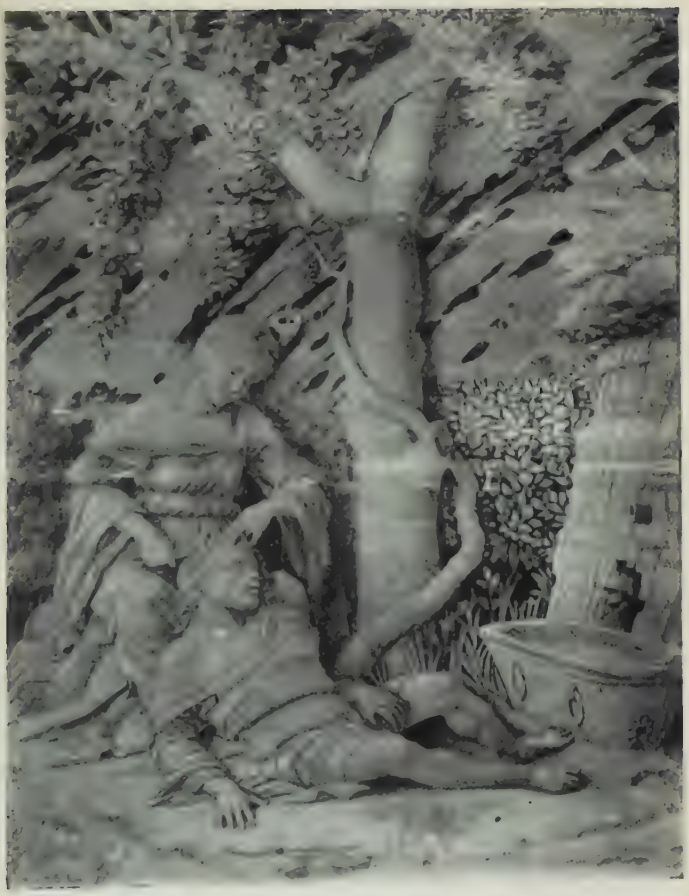
PLATE NO. XXIII

Leonardo da Vinci] [*Windsor*

Flower Study

Leonardo da Vinci] [*Burlington House*

Cartoon of S. Anne



Mantegna] [*National Gallery*

Samson and Delilah

Correggio] [*National Gallery*

Madonna with Basket

Francia] [*National Gallery*

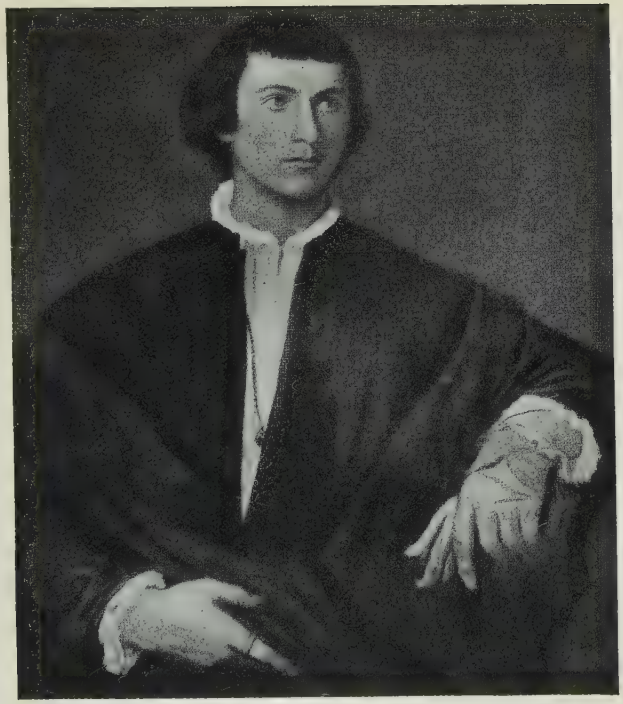
Madonna and Child with S. Anne

Giovanni Bellini] [*Academy, Bergamo*

Virgin and Child

Giorgione] [*Venice*

The Tempest Landscape



Titian] [*Louvre*

The Man with the Glove

Tintorreto] Self Portrait [*Louvre*

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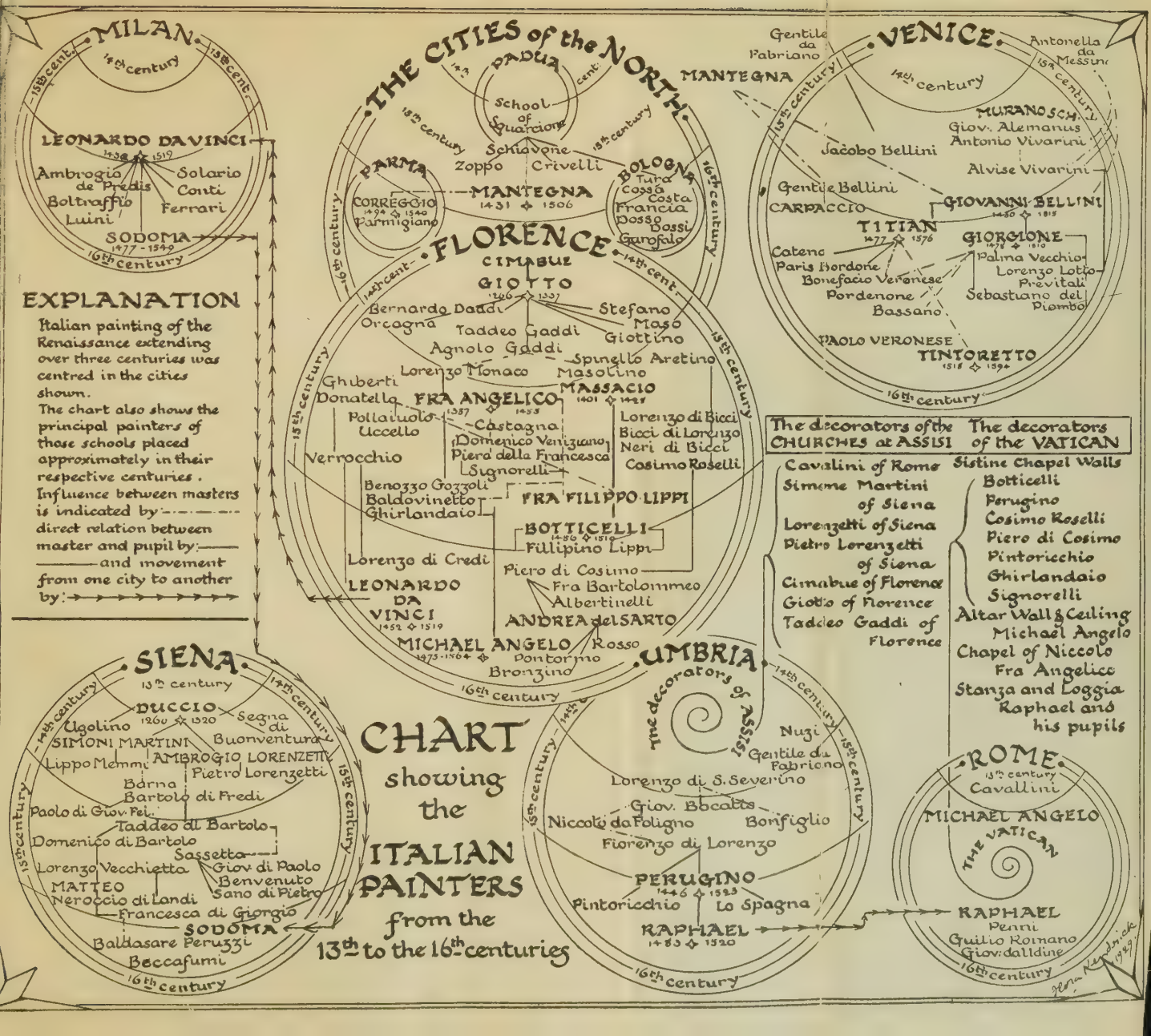
THE CITIES of the NORTH
MILAN
15th cent.
14th century
15th cent.
LEONARDO DA VINCI
1452 ✣ 1519
Ambrogio de Predis
Boltraffio
Luini
Solario
Conti
Ferrari
SODOMA
1477 - 1549
16th century
EXPLANATION
Italian painting of the Renaissance extending over three centuries was centred in the cities shown.
The chart also shows the principal painters of those schools placed approximately in their respective centuries.
Influence between masters is indicated by: -.-.-.-.- direct relation between master and pupil by: ——— and movement from one city to another by: →→→→→→
PADUA
14th cent.
15th cent.
School of Squarcione
Schiavone
Zoppo
Crivelli
MANTEGNA
1431 ✣ 1506
PARMA
CORREGGIO
1494 ✣ 1540
Parmigiano
BOLOGNA
Tura
Cossa
Costa
Francia
Possa
Bossi
Garofalo
15th century
16th century
FLORENCE
14th cent.
15th century
CIMABUE
GIOTTO
1266 ✣ 1337
Bernardo Daddi
Orcagna
Taddeo Gaddi
Agnolo Gaddi
Stefano
Maso
Giottino
Spinello Aretino
Lorenzo Monaco
Masolino
Ghiberti
Donatello
FRA ANGELICO
1387 ✣ 1455
MASSACIO
1401 ✣ 1428
Pollaiuolo
Uccello
Castagna
Domenico Veneziano
Piero della Francesca
Signorelli
Verrocchio
Lorenzo di Bicci
Bicci di Lorenzo
Neri di Bicci
Cosimo Roselli
Benozzo Gozzoli
Baldovinetto
Ghirlandaio
FRA FILIPPO LIPPI
BOTTICELLI
1480 ✣ 1516
Fillipino Lippi
Lorenzo di Credi
Piero di Cosimo
Fra Bartolommeo
Albertinelli
LEONARDO DA VINCI
1452 ✣ 1519
ANDREA del SARTO
MICHAEL ANGELO
1475-1564 ✣
Rosso
Pontormo
Bronzino
16th century
VENICE
Gentile da Fabriano
MANTEGNA
Antonella da Messina
14th century
15th century
15th century
MURANO SCH.
Giov. Alemanus
Antonio Vivarini
Jacobo Bellini
Alvise Vivarini
Gentile Bellini
GIOVANNI BELLINI
1430 ✣ 1515
CARPACCIO
TITIAN
1477 ✣ 1576
GIORGIONE
1471 ✣ 1510
Cateno
Paris Bordone
Bonefacio Veronese
Pordenone
Bassano
Palma Vecchio
Lorenzo Lotto
Previtali
Sebastiano del Piombo
PAOLO VERONESE
TINTORETTO
1518 ✣ 1594
16th century
The decorators of the CHURCHES at ASSISI
Cavalini of Rome
Simone Martini of Siena
Lorenzetti of Siena
Pietro Lorenzetti of Siena
Cimabue of Florence
Giotto of Florence
Taddeo Gaddi of Florence
The decorators of the VATICAN
Sistine Chapel Walls
Botticelli
Perugino
Cosimo Roselli
Piero di Cosimo
Pintoricchio
Ghirlandaio
Signorelli
Altar Wall & Ceiling
Michael Angelo
Chapel of Niccolo
Fra Angelico
Stanza and Loggia
Raphael and his pupils
SIENA
13th century
14th century
14th century
15th century
DUCCIO
1260 ✣ 1320
Segna di Buonventura
Ugolino
SIMONI MARTINI
Lippo Memmi
AMBROGIO LORENZETTI
Pietro Lorenzetti
Barna
Bartolo di Fredi
Paolo di Giov. Fei
Taddeo di Bartolo
Domenico di Bartolo
Sassetta
Lorenzo Vecchietta
Giov. di Paolo
Benvenuto
MATTEO
Neroccio di Landi
Sano di Pietro
Francesca di Giorgio
SODOMA
Baldasare Peruzzi
Beccafumi
15th century
16th century
CHART
showing
the
ITALIAN
PAINTERS
from the
13th to the 16th centuries
UMBRIA
14th century
15th century
15th century
The decorators of Assisi
Nugi
Gentile da Fabriano
Lorenzo di S. Severino
Giov. Boccatis
Niccolo da Foligno
Bonfiglio
Fiorenzo di Lorenzo
PERUGINO
1446 ✣ 1523
Pintoricchio
Lo Spagna
RAPHAEL
1483 ✣ 1520
16th century
ROME
13th century
Cavallini
MICHAEL ANGELO
THE VATICAN
RAPHAEL
Penni
Guilio Romano
Giov. dall'Udine
16th century